

**The Origin of the Checkers
and Modern Chess Game.
Volume III**



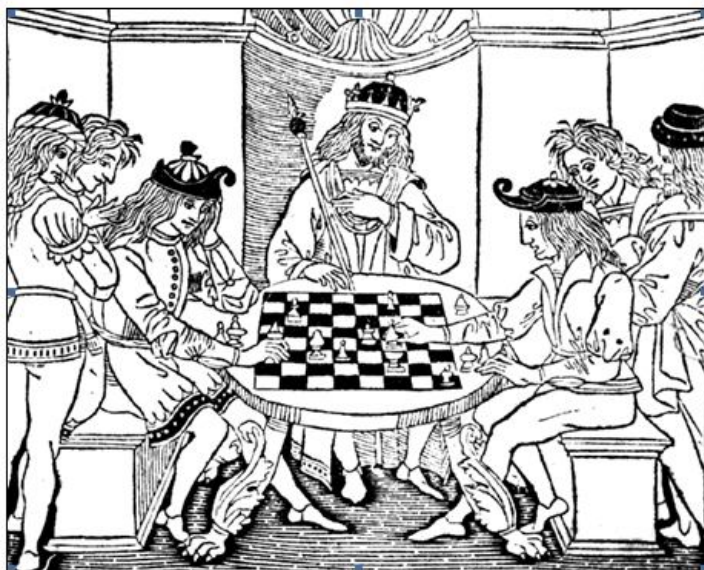
Govert Westerveld

The Origin of the Checkers and Modern Chess Game. Volume III



**GOVERT
WESTERVELD
2016**

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Date: March 20, 2016 - 07:04 AM

The Origin of the Checkers and Modern Chess Game. Volume III

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Academia de Estudios Humanísticos de Blanca

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ISBN: (Lulu Editors: 978-1-326-60244-4)

ISBN: (Bubok: None)

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to our friend Dr. Ricardo Calvo (1943-2002),
eminent Spanish chess researcher.

FOREWORD

Since 1987 we have defended in articles that the Spanish queen Isabella I of Castile (Isabel la Católica) was the new chess queen (dama) on the chessboard. Other publications were in 1990, 1994, 1997, and 2004. Now in 2015 we also defend that the new bishop on the chessboard was created at the same time as the new queen. The bishop in question was known at that time in Spain as the third monarch.

In 1997 we published in the Dutch¹ Language:

De invloed van de Spaanse koningin Isabel la Catolica op de nieuwe sterke dame in de oorsprong van het dam- en moderne schaakspel; Spaanse literatuur, jaren: 1283-1700

Translation:

The influence of the queen Isabel la Catolica on the new powerful dama in the origin of the draughts and modern chess game. Spanish literature, 1283-1700.

And of course, Marilyn Yalom studied our book during her visit to the National Library in The Hague (Holland) before she wrote *Birth*

¹ (1997). De invloed van de Spaanse koningin Isabel la Catolica op de nieuwe sterke dame in de oorsprong van het dam- en moderne schaakspel; Spaanse literatuur, jaren: 1283-1700. In collaboration with Rob Jansen, Beniel (Spain). ISBN 84-605-6372-3 - 329 pages.

of the *Chess Queen* in 2004. In her book one cannot see that in 1987, 1990, and 1994 we already published material about Isabel la Católica (Isabel I of Castile) being the new powerful dama or chess queen on the chessboard². In other words we can state here that we have been studying Spanish history and its chess literature for over 30 years. Since 2003 we have also known the development of the new bishop in chess. Now in 2015 we also defend by means of our book *The Birth of a New Bishop in Chess* the fact that the new bishop on the chessboard was created at the same time as the new queen. The bishop in question was known in Spain at the time as the third monarch.

The surname Lucena had much to do with the development of a new chess queen and seeing this fact we have lately written various books of which the chronological³ order should be taken into account.

Once again Dr. Ricardo Calvo encouraged José Antonio Garzón Roger to contact and work with me. After the death of our mutual

² (1987) Dutch Draughts Magazine Het Nieuwe Damspel, p. 71.

(1990) Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero. Volume I. Editor Promociones y Publicaciones Universitarias, S.A. (PPU S.A.) – Barcelona. ISBN 84-7665-697-0

(1994) Historia de la nueva dama poderosa en el juego de Ajedrez y Damas. (History of the New Powerful Queen in the Game of Chess and Draughts), pp. 103-225. Homo Ludens: Der spielende Mensch IV, Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule "Mozarteum" - Salzburg. Herausgegeben von Prof. Mag. Dr. Günther C. Bauer.

(1994) Homo Ludens, Der Spielende Mensch IV. Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule Mozarteum Salzburg, Salzburg.

³ (2015) The Ambassador Juan Ramírez de Lucena, the father of the chessbook writer Lucena. 226 pages. ISBN: 978-1-326-37728-1

(2015) The Training of Isabella I of Castile as the Virgin Mary by Churchman Martin de Cordoba in 1468. The Association of the Virgin Mary with the French Chess Piece "Dame" 172 pages.

ISBN: 978-1-326-40364-5

(2015) The Poem Scachs d'amor (1475). First Text of Modern Chess. - 144 pages. ISBN: 978-1-326-37491-4

(2015) The Birth of a New Bishop in Chess - 172 pages.

ISBN: 978-1-326-37044-2

friend in 2002 we started working together and this resulted in additional chapters to the book already published in 1997. The new book that we finished in 2004 is entitled⁴

La reina Isabel la Católica: su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna del ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas

Translation:

Queen Isabella I of Castile, her reflection on the powerful lady of Valencia, the birthplace of modern chess and origin of checkers.

The revised edition of our book of 1997 resulted in two volumes⁵ in 2013 and the third volume currently in creation. The time has come to publish this volume, but we decided to publish it in English seeing that practically all Dutch people know this language.

The author

⁴ (2004) La reina Isabel la Católica: su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna del ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas. Edition of the Generalitat Valenciana. Conselleria de Cultura, Educació i Esport. Secretaría Autonómica de Cultura, Valencia.

⁵ (2013) De Spaanse oorsprong van het Dam- en moderne schaakspel. Volume I 382 pages.

ISBN 978-1-291-66611-3

(2013) De Spaanse oorsprong van het Dam- en moderne schaakspel. Volume II 384 pages.

ISBN 978-1-291-69195-5

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Queen Isabella I of Castile, her reflection on the powerful lady of Valencia, the birthplace of modern chess and origin of checkers.

CHAPTER 18

Introduction

*Thanks to the deeds of Queen Isabella,
the truth about the dama reigns in Valencia.*
GOVERT WESTERVELD

The second part of my book was the result of a wonderful collaboration with the leading Spanish chess historian, Mr. José Antonio Garzón Roger. When I learnt by surprise, at the beginning of 2003, that my friend Ricardo Calvo had passed away, somehow, I felt guilty without knowing exactly why. I could no longer talk with him about the new powerful queen, the most important revolution in the history of the games of chess and draughts.

Asides from his great achievements as a chess player, Ricardo should be considered as one of the pioneers of research and action regarding the history of new powerful queen in chess, a complex line of research that we shared for many years;⁶

⁶ Westerveld, Govert (1987), *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, p. 71: “How was it possible that the dama (queen) suddenly received such a high value in chess and dama? We do not know the reason, but we should bear in mind that many Spaniards think of Isabella as their greatest ruler.” I had been looking for evidence for my hypothesis since 1987.

Westerveld, Govert (1988), *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, p. 29. “Why was Isabella such an important figure? She convinced her husband to finance Columbus in his discovery of the New World. She persuaded her husband of the necessity of a single religion, and therefore expelled the Jews and conquered Granada. This queen visited her soldiers on horseback throughout her territory. She was really more of a general than a queen and, at any rate, a more important figure than her husband, King Ferdinand.” Westerveld, Govert (1990). *Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero*, Volume 1. p. 7. I gave instructions to a painter to make me a portrait of Isabella the Catholic, which can be seen on page 7 with the caption: “Isabel la Católica, la reina de las damas” (Isabella the Catholic, the queen of queens/draughts).



José Antonio Garzón Roger and Anatoly Karpov

Ricardo's work was in the field of chess and mine in the field of draughts. When I read the news of his death, it upset me that Ricardo would no longer be able to defend the Spanish origin of the new powerful queen, which had been the focus of his life work. Therefore, I immediately made the decision to translate my book into Spanish in order to show not only that the invention of the new powerful queen had taken place Valencia, which both Ricardo and I believed, but also

Calvo, Ricardo (1991), Birthplace of modern chess. New in Chess, Alkmaar (Holland). Calvo independently came to similar conclusions, although he saw it as speculation: "At the same time, a powerful queen, Isabella of Castile, is playing 3 prominent political role at least as important of that of her husband, Ferdinand of Aragon. The decision to change the rules of the medieval queen and create the new, powerful queen of modern chess, could be explained by referring to this cultural atmosphere, although this is, and will remain, a matter of speculation".

that this great revolution was influenced by Queen Isabella of Castile (my hypothesis). Ricardo knew about my book and my hypothesis for many years, but our paths separated in 1997 when I decided to devote myself entirely to the history of the beautiful town of Blanca, in the Ricote Valley, which was the last most important location where the Moriscos remained in Spain in the year 1613. Ricardo made unsuccessful attempts to convince me to continue with the history of draughts, but I needed a break after 10 years of research. Also, considering my work somewhat finished, I was hoping that sooner or later other researchers would verify my theories and furnish further evidence.

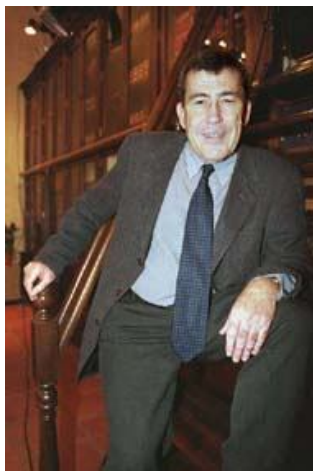
However, for some reason this has not been the case until now, and I felt the moral obligation to continue Ricardo's work. After spending several months translating my book, I was contacted by the chess historian José Antonio Garzón, because Ricardo Calvo had told him several times we should meet⁷. The message was more or less to put an end to the great injustice of the history of chess regarding the origin of modern chess. Culturally speaking, this was a decisive topic for Spain and especially for Valencia. With arguments and evidence on our side, if we united forces, truth and justice would prevail.

As a result, an exchange of impressions soon took place between Garzón and me, and, proof of his open and probing mind, this is what Garzón told me at the beginning of our collaboration:

In my opinion, and as I told Fernando Sánchez Dragó when he interviewed me, what lies behind the great revolution in the queen's chess is not a specific woman, but the spirit of an era. In Valencian Golden Age poetry the feminine is pursued, craved, idealised. As Westerveld has stated about the art of draughts, the key personage could be Queen Isabella; but in the case of chess, she did not play a

⁷ When I had finished chapter 21 of *Scachs d'amor*, Garzón confessed to me: "Now I understand why Ricardo urged me to contact you (he gave me your telephone number several times). Perhaps he guessed that, because of our working methods, we would focus on this issue and study it in depth like it had never been done before."

role as an inspiring reference (due to the dates) but rather as the real reason for its acceptance, popularity and impulse (the board reflected a situation that already existed in the real life of the monarchy). At any rate, the role of the Catholic Kings is crucial. King Ferdinand himself was an inveterate chess player (he must have known both ways of playing), as his chronicler Hernando de Pulgar painted out several times.



Fernando Sánchez Dragó

Exactly one week before, a very long article had been posted on the Web by the draughts writer José Luis González Sanz, which brilliantly showed his scepticism toward my hypothesis regarding the influence of Queen Isabella of Castile. This criticism was very useful for me for several reasons. In the first place, González fully confirmed that the hypothesis involving Queen Isabella of Castile was indeed mine. Secondly, from now on he could not change his position and write about History without citing origins and references⁸ as he used to do;

⁸ González Sanz forgot to mention bibliographical references in the chapter “Origin and History” in his book *Tratado Hipermoderno del juego de damas*. The same could he said for the “Bibliography” chapter containing book covers of Alonso Guerra, Juan de Timoneda (1635), Pedro Ruiz Montero, Lorenzo Valls and the manuscript *Canónigo de Sacro Monte*, all of which are rarely published and remain in the hands of very few. Only Víctor Cantalapiedra Martín, from Valladolid, has a

and in the third place, his article did not encourage⁹ future research, which meant I could do my research in peace. I want to confirm here Garzón's great quality as a researcher. He never let himself be influenced by

González Sanz's demonstrative message. Although González was right on many points, he was wrong to accept certain ideas and did not furnish any of his own evidence regarding what others had researched and written, some of which I knew to be erroneous. Garzón, who knows from experience what it takes to conduct research, did not take my work lightly and, on the contrary made his position clear from the beginning:

Therefore, I think, Govert, that your work must not to be taken lightly. Quite the contrary. Probably, thanks to your work, it will become possible to confirm not only the Spanish origins of draughts (if you allow me, the Valencian origins) but also those of modern chess as

copy of the manuscripts by Diego de Argomedo. The Canónigo de Sacro Monte manuscript also belongs to Víctor Cantalapiedra Martín; then it came into the hands of Govert Westerveld, and finally into the hands of Sena Carneiro, from Portugal. Victor Cantalapiedra Martín, Govert Westerveld and Sena Carneiro have a copy of the book by Juan Timoneda. A copy of the book by Pedro Ruiz Montero and Lorenzo Valls is also in the hands of very few people.

⁹ The following sentences were very useful to me:

"The logical incongruity is so great that even if this idea were correct, it is so scientifically unsound that it could not be verified in the real world."

"Time proximity with the reign of the Catholic Kings: This is a childish argument, seeing as it lacks any proof and with this kind of logic we could argue that any event is the result of the rule or the corresponding influential person, so that we could conclude that football must have been inspired by the Kings of England or the theory of relativity by the Kaiser and other ensuing nonsense."

"The power of the dame: wanting to see at all costs that the strength of the dame over the pawns was a homage to the queen is nothing but childish nonsense."

"Lack of concrete evidence: There is an endless list of absurdities that can be argued and which say nothing positive about the people who follow them."

"Where is the Catholic hypothesis? Well, it's completely obliterated, and I have proved it so many times in this study that it is even becoming tedious; therefore, I won't insist on it anymore, especially since some of the points argued about draughts also apply here, but I see no point in pursuing them."

well. I believe that the role of Queen Isabella is, at any rate, crucial and decisive-as you pointed out for the first time in a clear, scientific and convincing way- regarding chess as well as to draughts.

I made him see at another time that “making a discovery is seeing what everyone has seen and thinking what no one has thought”, as was stated by the famous researcher and Nobel prize winner for his work on Vitamin C, Dr. Albert von Szent-Györgyi Nagrapolt¹⁰ in 1937.



Szent-Györgyi

Criticism has to be confronted on a daily basis because it cannot be excluded from the research process¹¹. What is important is to have

¹⁰ This piece of advice from this famous scholar is essential to my day to day work on bioflavonoids derived from citrus fruits. I knew from the experience of my chemical researcher friends that discovering the impossible is the consequence of seeing things in a different way. Garzón was kind enough to send me the book *El poema de Scachs d'amor* written by Ricardo Calvo. I couldn't understand the texts since they were written in the Valencian language, but I felt that the poem could tell us many things. Garzón had already studied the poem thoroughly, but had to review it again from a different point of view. He did it brilliantly.

¹¹ Although they are considered good historians and researchers in their respective countries (Germany, Holland, Spain, Portugal and France), their names are irrelevant, I was shocked at how quickly and skilfully they gave their opinions and wrote negatively about my work. Sometimes I felt like I was in the hands of prosecutors rather than scholars who question and ponder.

clear ideas and then to proceed, at all costs. With these concepts in mind, we began to do serious research in the following months. In my work I once thought of a sweetener deriving from citrus fruits. A doctor of chemistry told me I was looking for utopia. He had done some tests without any results, therefore my idea was useless. When I told him he hadn't done the tests correctly, he bitinglly answered: "Who do you think you are? You're not even a chemist!" Since I had clear ideas, the criticism didn't bother me. I knew that I had to go on where others had given up. I knew that with time I could convince other researchers to try to produce it, and nowadays¹² Neohesperidin Dihydrochalcone is a leading Spanish product on the international scene. Without my faith and perseverance probably it would have never been produced in Spain. Why was I so sure this product could be made? Very simple: because for a number of years I had read and researched, more than anyone else and in my free time, this subject that fascinated me.

I have mentally invented perpetual motion by means of a water device that uses two forces involving the law of ascending pressure and the law of gravity. When one force ends the other begins. It works with water, air, weights, and capsules. I presented my idea to British Petroleum and asked them for authorization to speak with their best engineers. British Petroleum dryly answered that they have their own researchers. I came in contact with a good international inventor, an expert in water devices who believed in my invention; as did his son, an engineer and secondary school teacher. During my business trips I presented my idea to a physics professor from a Canadian university who told me: "Your invention cannot work with the laws that are known today" but he liked the idea so much that he went on to say, "I'm going to show it to my students to see if they can find it's weak point". He himself didn't know, because he had to study it further. I gave up the project due to my multiple trips abroad and because I wasn't an engineer, but I met for safety with a notary public and had

¹² See www.furesa.es (today: www.nutrafur.com), www.newflavonoids.com, www.neohesperidin.com and www.furfural.biz

the invention written up in Dutch, because I still believe in the possibility. But what I'd really like to show with these examples is that people should have creative minds in spite of obstacles and criticism, which will never be lacking. As Einstein said: "Imagination is more important than knowledge."

When I said that Timoneda's book, published in 1635, had really been printed around 1550, one of the best draughts historians, the Dutch Kruijswijk, criticised my 12 arguments. In a masterly style that the best lawyers couldn't have improved, Kruijswijk dismantled, at least that was his idea, my arguments one by one. The conclusion, according to Kruijswijk, was that what I meant with my 12 arguments was "impossible". Today we know, without any doubt, that I was on the right track. I mention these three past experiences because I am used to people criticising me. On this point my friend Calvo, With his free and independent spirit, was always an example for me: a historian in search of truth should always work independently and without outside pressures or influences.

After I had formulated in books my hypothesis about the fact that the new powerful queen of modern chess and draughts¹³ was nothing but than the symbolisation of Isabella of Castile, almost no one agreed with me, especially chess and draughts historians. Instead of leaving the door open and waiting for events, they preferred to criticise a 10-year-long study. One of the few who believed in my work was precisely Ricardo Calvo¹⁴. However, experience has taught me that criticism is often not scientific, but rather a question of uncontrolled

¹³ Westerveld, Govert (1992), *Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero*. Vol. 2, p. 3-27, Westerveld, Govert (1994), *Homo Ludens, Der Spielende Mensch IV Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule Mozarteum Salzburg*, Salzburg.

Westerveld. Govert (1996), *Homo Ludens. El hombre que juega*. Vol. I. Instituto para la Investigación y la Pedagogía del Juego ((Salzburg).

Westerveld, Govert (1997), *La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de damas y el ajedrez moderno.*, p.218.

¹⁴ Calvo, unlike Egbert-Meisenburg, did not reject this possibility, but he did no further research in that direction.

human reactions, and is often induced by envy, laziness, presumptuousness, insufficient study, a lack of training, economic reasons, etc. In short, some of the worst qualities of human beings. Only scientific criticism interests me, which is almost always conspicuously absent.

I have continued my regular visits to the University of Murcia, where I simply offer my points of view and doubts, historically speaking, to the best Murcian historian of all time, Professor Juan Torres Fontes¹⁵. "I owe a lot¹⁶" to this professor emeritus of medieval history of the University of Murcia, who is also the Director of the Royal Academy Alfonso X el Sabio. In the 15 years I have visited him, I have presented two hypotheses to him: one was approved without problems and the other was completely rejected. If it were finally accepted without reservations that Queen Isabella of Castile was symbolised by the new powerful queen, in chess as well as draughts, we would have to recognise that this professor has participated in this hypothesis. Other professors worth mentioning are Angel Luis Molina Molina and Francisco de Asís Veas Arteseros, both professors of History at the University of Murcia, who have shown a lot of interest in our research¹⁷. Torres Fontes is today the best representative of medieval Murcian historiography and I have learned from this professor a peremptory obligation: that of making it fully possible for others to conduct research while remaining independent. For this reason my

¹⁵ The book written by Professor Juan Torres Fontes in 1993, entitled *Castilla-Granada, una partida de Ajedrez y privilegio de asilo concedido por los Reyes Católicos a la villa de Salobreña*, is very curious. Even real life was chess.

¹⁶ When this same professor saw my last book Blanca, *El Ricote de Don Quijote. Expulsión y regreso de los moriscos del último enclave islámico más grande en España*, a book over 1,000 pages long and with a foreword by Dr. Francisco Márques Villanueva of Harvard University, one of the leading historians in the world on the subject of Moriscos, he decided to introduce me to the Royal Academy Alfonso X el Sabio. Thanks to his initiative I was unanimously nominated as a Corresponding Academic. A great honour!

¹⁷ Molina Molina, Angel Luis (1997-1998), "Los juegos de mesa en la Edad Media", in *Miscelánea Medieval Murciana* 22, p. 215-237.

books are filled with references and, more recently, filled with original documents as well.



Govert Westerveld and Professor Dr. Juan Torres Fontes

Mr. Garzón and I have worked in this atmosphere of research and scientific criticism. We have exchanged many documents and, above all, have tried to find the truth. In order to do this, a constant flow of thoughts, the rejection of arguments and the creation of ideas were all necessary. This is also how we have spoken at length about the poem *Scachs d'amor*. I am not fluent in the Valencian language, but I was sure that more information could be found in the poem, even more exact dates, but always basing it on Queen Isabella of Castile. Garzón, always guessing from technical aspects of the game that the poem must date back to around 1474, made an in-depth review of *Scachs d'amor*¹⁸ in accordance with my thesis. Thanks to Garzón's wise and

¹⁸ Calvo had already dedicated a book to this poem: Calvo, Ricardo (1999), *El Poema Scachs d'amor (siglo XV). Primer texto conservado sobre ajedrez moderno... Análisis y comentarios*. Jaque XXI, SL. Madrid.

inquisitive mind¹⁹, the results he obtained were sensational and during the research he told me: *"Every day I think your idea is clearer, more logical. In fact, some doubts that I had about the MS. have now dissipated."* With the obtained data we finished the work that our friend Ricardo had begun, which he didn't have the time to finish before he passed away. We are sure that from where he is now, he must be contemplating the results of our research with great satisfaction.

I shall briefly describe the second part of this book, whose chapters I have tried to write in a simple style. Chapter 18 offers an introduction - and chapter 19 discusses the additions to the described chapters of Volume I. In chapter 20 I prove the influence of chess in the game of draughts and in chapter 21 I address the poem *Scachs d'amor* and look into history of that time period. By paying close attention to the sword²⁰ of Castile, I was able to determine that the new powerful queen was introduced in Spain after the year 1474 and a very good case can be made for dating the poem in 1476, when the Queen of Castile and her husband, King Ferdinand, crushed, in May, the Portuguese King's army in Toro.

The new discoveries unveiled by the historian Garzón in chapter 22 clearly show that the new powerful queen was in fact a symbolic portrayal of Queen Isabella of Castile, and that her power on the chessboard was conceived as a reflection of her power in real life.

¹⁹ As is always the case with scholars, Garzón also had doubts and reflected a lot before giving a definite opinion. He didn't make a hasty judgement, but rather also consulted Antoni Ferrando, full professor of Catalan philology at the University of Valencia and member of the Academia Valenciana de la Lengua, an authority in everything concerning the Valencian poetry of the century and period that concerns us. He has published a very important book on Narcís Vinyoles.

²⁰ As I explained in the journal *Het Nieuwe Damspel* (1992, p. 87) professor Juan Torres Fontes is a brilliant historian and writer on Isabella of Castile. Thanks to his advice. I was able to study the life of this queen with extensive details. This advice was the basis for figuring out the date of the poem. The game of draughts is known as checkers in the United States (translator's note).

In chapter 23 we make a brief, though intense, summary of Mr. Garzón's new research about the book by Francesh Vicent. It has been proven that his book was indeed printed in Valencia and that it must exist somewhere in the world. In fact, he provides some clues on how to find it. Garzón also shows that the Lucena book is a copy, at least in part, of the book by Francesh Vicent and, therefore, so is the Damian book. In chapter 24 I show with near certainty that Nicolas Antonio made a mistake regarding authorship, that the book by Torquemada never existed, and that the name he should have been referred to was Juan Timoneda. In chapter 25 Garzón proves in no less than 14 arguments, that the game of draughts was created in Valencia, as an imitation of the new powerful queen in the modern game of chess. In chapter 26 I show the world the latest manuscript found in Spain on the game of draughts that dates back to circa 1725, but whose texts are estimated to date from between 1639 and 1725. In chapter 27 I show the excellent relationship that there was between the utmost Spanish humanist, Antonio de Nebrija, and Queen Isabella. This new evidence called for a new concept regarding the game of draughts, which is expressed in chapter 28. Chapter 29 contains the bibliography. Finally the book finishes with an epilogue, written by the best chess historian in Spain, José Antonio Garzón Roger, which brings out the most important points of this book.

I'd like to take advantage of this opportunity to express my gratitude toward those who have helped me in the preparation of the second part of this book. First and foremost, to Mr. Garzón for having helped me in every way, and for his enthusiasm for continuing and finishing satisfactorin the work begun by Dr. Ricardo Calvo. The great achievement of my friend José Antonio Garzón Roger making my 1987 hypothesis a reality, by means of rigorous and thorough research, free of restraints or interferences of any kind.

I would also like to thank the best draughts bibliophile, my long time friend, Mr. Víctor Cantalapiedra, from Valladolid, an expert on many draughts secrets from the 16th century. And my friend Rob Jansen, from Amsterdam, who, as usual, was always willing to help me with

additional facts and translations. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Juan Torres Fontes, one of the few who believed in my hypothesis and who was always willing to give me advice and show me the way to continue my research. Finally, the truth about the queen in Valencia, which Ricardo Calvo, José Antonio Garzón Roger and myself so dearly upheld, prevails!

Govert Westerveld

**Voice of the Technical Committee of History of the
Spanish Chess Federation (FEDA).
Official historian of the World Draughts Federation (FMJD)
Member of the International Association of Hispanists
Member of the Royal Academy Alfonso X el Sabio
Official Historian of the town Blanca (Murcia) Spain**

CHAPTER 19

Additions to previous chapters

The man is always willing to deny
everything he does not understand
ARISTOTLE

Chapter 2

ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD JALDETA

1376 QUEK

Quek[e], quek[e] board (English), quaken, quaeck, quaecbert, quaeckbord (Middle Dutch), quekebret (Middle Low German) was the name of a simple game described in a document²¹ from 1376:



Dice game

at tables or at chequers, commonly called quek; a pair of tables on the outside of which was painted a chequerboard that is called a quek [*The board or board with squares, commonly called jaldeta; a box of boards on which a board with squares named jaldeta had been painted*].

People used to bet on a color of the board (chess) and on which part or square the dice would fall once thrown on the board.

²¹ ASHTON, History of Gambling in England, 1899, 14. Quoted by Thierry Depaulis

MURRAY, History of Chess, 1913, 442; OED, sv). Quoted by Thierry Depaulis

1431 RULES STATED IN A FRENCH DOCUMENT

Reims (1431): A aussi celui qui est chastelain droit de prendre la moitié d'un triquet, qui est une table ou l'on a acoustumé de jouer à blanc et à noir à un instrument que on dit triquet, et laquelle table se baille a ferme chacun an par lesdis mayeur et chastelain, et y prend ledit chastelain moitié en tout²²

1501 OLD ORDINANCE BY THE SAN ANDRES DE EIBAR COUNCIL

One of the characteristic features of the late medieval society was their gambling and particularly the games called "*tablajería*" (type of tables) or board games. Eibar was no exception in this regard, so the council assembly was forced to adopt a series of measures in order to control the clutter associated with the practice of these games. Initially they had found that board games were a source of all kinds of problems such as physical assaults, ill will, indebtedness, discussions, profanity, etc., but their prohibition was impossible to be implemented due to the fact that people were too fond of them. The Eibar council tried to limit practising the game through the old ordinance because the fondness for the game was so strong that people committed the serious immorality of playing while religious services were taking place. They therefore agreed:

Chapter thirty, nobody shall play on Sundays or holidays or from when the mass begins until it is finished, nor when vespers are started until they are finished.

2. **GODEFROY, F.** Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IXe au XVe siècle, Paris, 1880-1902 (10 vol.), sv "tringlet" (with ref. to "Enquete afuture"), quoted by Thierry Depaulis

GAY, VITOR, Glossaire archéologique du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance, Paris, 1887-1928 (2 vol.) "triquet", with ref. to P.-J. Varin, Archives administratives de la ville de Reims, Arch. législ., I, 591. Quoted by Thierry Depaulis

Moreover, they stated and commanded that no men nor children aged twelve and more will play dice, nor jaldeta, nor cards, nor varreta, nor any other illicit game on Sundays or holidays after the mass begins and until it is finished. And in the same way they commanded that they will not play in the Ulsaga rivulet or Ybarra's house, or Iohan d'Elixalde's house or Urquidi's houses, when religious festivals are started by playing flute until finishing the same festivals, nor in any house within the mentioned limits, with a penalty of one pound of wax for each one for each time for Sant Andrés Church and thirty maravedís each for each time for the aforementioned officials of the council.
(Royal File Valladolid Chancellery. P. C. Pérez Alonso (F). C-283/5. Writing authorised by notary Sancho Sánchez de Ibarra)

The article above is so rich that it is worth analysing more than once. To begin with, note that the prohibition is exclusively for males - a clear sign that the opposite sex did not participate in this kind of games. It is also curious that these games are described as "illicit" when they are allowed de facto. But what has great significance is the fact that it provides us with the games played by the late medieval Eibar society even when in some cases it is difficult to specify their basic rules. Firstly there are dice games, with Muslim roots, which is the main medieval game where people bet money. Next *jaldeta* (also known as *blanca*) is mentioned, of which despite not knowing the rules we know that it was played on a board.

Chapter 6

THE TERM MARRO DE PUNTA

As the chess historian José Antonio Garzón Roger states, the term is very important, because it clarifies that it is a new game played on a board with oblique movement as the essence of it. The aforementioned historian continues, analysing and explaining the issue thoroughly, point by point with the following observations:

It is pertinent to analyse the movement of the old bishop in chess. In fact, when the historian explains in articles or lectures how it moved, he states that its movements were identical to catching on checkers (even jumping over a piece), but dominating only the destiny square.



A few things in chess texts strengthen the argument expressed in the Marro de Punta chapter:

MS. of the Cathedral of Gerona, sermon by Cessolis²³ translated into Catalan in the early fifteenth century. Transcript by Manuel de Bofarrull in 1902.

Cathedral of Gerona

pg. 107. About the bishop's movement one reads: (...) *tota hora procehint en angle. Car l'anament angular significa cautela.*

(Loose translation:)

At all times they move in angles. Since angular movement suggests caution.

About the rook's movement one reads:

(...) *los Rochs null temps no van de punta, mas de plà*

(Loose translation:)

²³ Very interesting research has been carried out regarding Cessolis' work. We are talking about **Alexandre Bataller's** doctoral thesis titled: *Les traduccions catalanes del Liber de Moribus Hominum et Officiis Nobilium Super Ludo Scachorum de Jacobus de Cessulis*. Universitat de València. Facultat de Filologia. València, 2001. Professor Antoni Ferrando informed us of the news. It is a very important work which we hope to see published one day.

Rooks never move diagonally, but plainly (straight).

We have another meaning for the term *de punta*: angular. And at the same time it opposes the Rooks': plane or straight opposes crooked or oblique.

Dechado de la vida humana moralmente sacado del juego del ajedrez. Martín de Reyna. 1544 (2nd best known edition from 1549). This is the first Spanish translation of Cessolis' moralising sermon.

Bishops' movement:

"Bishops or judges have all three points of sideways, because they do not move nor take straight, except as crooked.

Points means again squares (on the board) and *traviesa* can be equalled to oblique (sideways).

Horses' movement:

"They have three points: two are straight and sideways, the other is a crooked move.

·
Edition of Cessolis, of Brunet i Bellet (1900). Reproduces the MS. of the National Library, which is apparently a Catalanian translation of a text in Latin from the famous book by Cessolis:

Bishops' movement:

tota hora proceen en angle. Car l'enament angular significa cautela

Rooks' movement:

(...) ls Rochs nul temps no van en angle, mas sempre en dret.

They insist on angular movement, but in this version it is clear that they speak of Rook's *angle*: *punta*.

Lucena, 1497, opposes *barra* (straight, vertical) to *esquina* (oblique, diagonal):

Bishops go by esquina, bit by bit, except in the old game where they go three by three squares and also by esquina.

The rooks always go by barra, not by esquina

And lastly, very relevant:

Alfonso X, the Wise (1283):

The bishop goes one square in sosquino.

Bishops jump three squares on pospunta.

Horses jump three squares counting two straight from them, and taking the third in sosquino.



Alfonso X the Wise

Here we find something new and of great significance according to the historian, since he uses *sosquino* (corner), which can be equalled to the terms we have seen before, *angle*, *angular*, *traviesa*, *oblicuo*, *ladeado*, *torcido*, etc., for the diagonal movement which is short or of only one step, but when describing the jump of the old bishop (2 steps and jumping over piece) he uses the word *pospunta*.

And in conclusion historian José Antonio Garzón observes that precisely this jumping or movement of the old bishop is the one that can be compared to the capture movement on checkers; “ultimately, about the chess movement which is most similar to a checkers game movement he speaks of *pospunta*”.

1561 Ruy López de Segura

Hereby we list the old texts with the word ***punta*** of the chess book by Ruy Lopez de Sigura:

The queen or dame can run all over the board finding her way straight on, sideways, and transversally like a rook; and takes all she finds and wishes to take.

She also moves diagonally like bishops and pawns.



Ruy López de Segura

About the bishops' movement, it is diagonally.

The movement of this knight is three by three squares, not straight on, nor sideways, nor diagonally, but from white to black and from black to white.

Because wherever it is, it can run on two lines straight and sideways, as long as its movement is always straight without going diagonally.

Because its movement is not straight on, nor sideways nor diagonally.

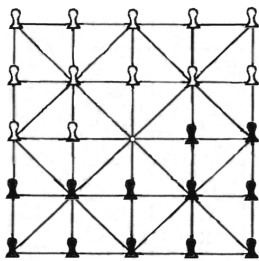
Moreover, players usually have three in common, so it should be equal to all the players who can be given a clean piece, give them the piece, or otherwise king to the corner and pawn diagonally and two manos (playing at first).

In addition they usually have an equal game with a pawn from the punta, a knight, and la mano (playing at first) for a rook.

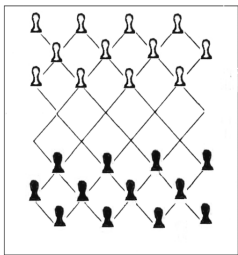
Chapter 7

ANDARRAYA

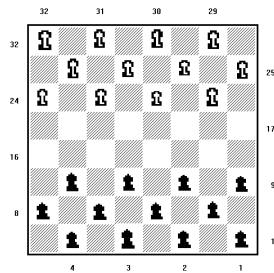
Someone realized - as recently did Mr. Garzon - that if you tried to move a lined game like alquerque to a board with squares, the pieces on black squares (with the white square to the right or vice versa) had no diagonal movement unlike the remaining pieces in squares of another color. As this could create confusion, even though the game could be practiced, it had to be expanded shortly after to a much more known and practiced board as was the chess one, conserving the twelve alquerque pawns and using only one color on the board and with only the diagonal movement.



Alquerque-12



Andarraya
Lined



Andarraya
with squares

Thus, as Mr. Garzón says, at the end two pawns against one on an 8x8 board (andarraya) always make a winner. The knowledge of that analytical truth, which almost happened in alquerque, becomes reality in andarraya and defines the game strategy, as will happen with the kings as knowing the end called *la forzosa* where 3 kings with the main diagonal already conquered inexorably impose to 1 king. Knowing the basic endings, as suggested by Capablanca for chess it is the first step to mastering these games.

As Mr. Garzón says: "As exposed in the additions²⁴, we see alquerque-12 as a clever and enjoyable game to practice. It does seem to us as a precedent of checkers, but the two games lack a missing link: the existence of andarraya mid-fifteenth century was a great find, as it evolutionarily coincides in time and meets the intermediate characteristics between alquerque and checkers".

Chapter 8

ALQUERQUE-12

850 – 1050 Navalmoralejo

In the municipality of Navalmoralejo (Toledo) stand the ruins of Basque, a Hispanic-Muslim city from the IX-XI centuries. In the municipality of Vascos was found a copy of a fragmented alquerque of twelve²⁵ made of brick. Apparently this game was played in this city from the ninth to the eleventh centuries.

1150 Ourense Cathedral

The construction of the Ourense Cathedral took place between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. We found a board of alquerque on one of its stones. A drawing of Alquerque is also seen above a stone in San Fiz de Freitas²⁶.

1265 Cieza

When I was writing the story of the expulsion of the Moriscos from the last largest Muslim enclave of Spain, i.e. the history of the town of

²⁴ Additions in chapter 19 in reference to previous chapters of Alquerque and Andarraya (Volume I).

²⁵ **COSIN CORRAL, YOLANDA; GARCIA APARICIO, CONSTANTINO** (1998) Alquerque, mancala y dados: Juegos musulmanes en la ciudad de Vascos. In: Revista de Arqueología, 1998, Volume 19, Nº 201, pp. 38-47

²⁶ **HIDALGO CUÑARRO, JOSE MANUAL, COSTAS GABERNA, FERNANDO JAVIER** (1997) Los juegos de tablero en Galicia

Blanca²⁷ located in the beautiful valley of Ricote, I also looked at the history of Cieza which is about 10km from Blanca. There, high up in the mountains of Cieza centuries ago, was the city of Medina Siyasa. A few years ago there was an investigation on the remains of this village that was suddenly abandoned by its inhabitants, leaving the Muslim town in good condition for its archaeological study centuries later. Medina-Siyasa (or just Siyasa) is today the largest known depopulated Hispanic-Muslim extension.

Between 1244 and 1263 the policy of Alfonso X *the Wise* was getting harder, causing the revolt of the mudejars in 1264 and the subsequent repression in 1266. In later years Cieza (Medina-Siyasa) ended up completely depopulated. The archaeological study of the remains of Siyasa made 20 years ago has shown that most of the houses were closed immediately prior to abandonment. Doors and windows were boarded up. A possible explanation for this is that the Muslim inhabitants of the city were planning to leave and emigrate due to the Castillian pressure, trying to sell their property at any price to get money to flee with. Everyone who left their houses hastily tried to avoid them getting occupied by boarding them up, perhaps thinking about future hypothetical return²⁸.

The old Siyasa now brought to light shows an interesting set of 18 Andalusian houses from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Due to the good condition of the abandoned village archaeologists had found on some stones two games of alquerque that the museum had listed as alquerque of nine, while we were rather of the opinion that those were drawings of alquerque of twelve. This means that, aside from finding the alquerque of twelve game in the Alfonso X the Wise's book, this game was very popular among the Arabs in those years.

²⁷ WESTERVELD, GOVERT (2001) Blanca, "El Ricote de Don Quijote". Expulsión y regreso de los moriscos del último enclave islámico más grande de España. Años 1613 - 1654

²⁸ GONZÁLEZ CASTEX, MARÍA DOLORES AND OTHERS (1997) Cieza, espacio y tiempo. Page 74



Alfonso X the Wise

1283 THE KING ALFONSO X THE WISE

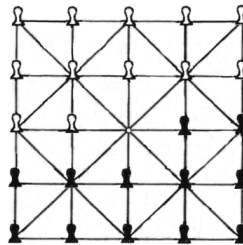
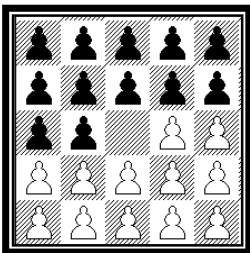
Comments on this paragraph from José Antonio Garzón Roger:

CONSIDERATIONS AND REGULATION OF THE ALQUERQUE GAME (1283)

The most important thing is that the wise King Alfonso X says **that the alquerque-12 game has borrowed something of chess, backgammon and dice.**

From the Chess:

- 1.- It is played with the head, applying intelligent reasoning (thinking)
- 2.- The pieces are like chess pawns



Alquerque starting position in 1283. The pieces are all together forming one az and leaving free the central square. Left: analog transfer to a checkered 5 x 5 board.

From the backgammon:

1. Because of the possibility that the game can end in a draw.
2. Because of the signs carried out on the board where you put the pieces together. Reading the chapter on tables there is no doubt about that. The possibility that these signs were carried out on the pawns for marking a coronation (for example) do not exist. **In the backgammon game the signs are used to indicate the placement of the discs.** The thick lines of the alquerque-12 mark on one hand, the routes or movements of the pieces and, on the other hand, their intersections, such as saying Alfonso X, indicate the location of the pawns that have to be located all in az (all together forming a bunch).

From the dice:

The dice determines who begins the game, because as the wise King says, who starts the game has a worse game.

Important: Due to the confusion that still exists, the seriousness that requires this matter, and the frivolity with which many players and historians have come to its rules, on August 2, 2003 in Chelva, Garzón practiced alquerque with a good childhood friend and an excellent chess player, **José Martínez Llopart**. The game that had been played in those days removed any doubts about the game. Garzon, with the alquerque board as testing bench, could set the following:

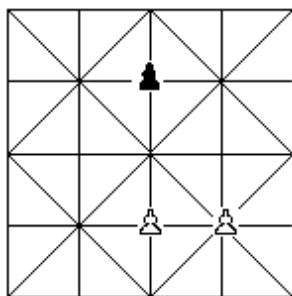
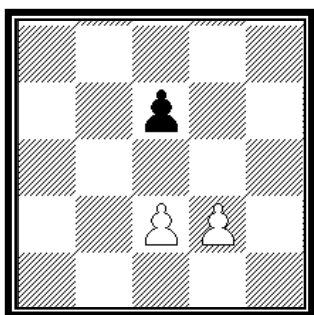
Sinopisis on the game development:

The pieces **move in any direction one step**. The idea of any direction, even backwards, is confirmed in the text of the wise King Alfonso X. The lines indicate a straight on direction. The traces of these lines are well marked confirming the itinerary of the pawns.

The possibility of a coronation has not been observed anywhere. This must be ruled out completely, as something like that and also the nature of the new piece ought to have been stated by the wise King Alfonso X. As in all games the wise King Alfonso X gives us sufficient rules of the games to practice them. Therefore he does not

indicate what happens when the pawn reaches the end of the board. This is already implied in its motion: simply turning back. There is no need to mark the pawns that reaches the end of the board. This was confirmed during the play session between **José Antonio Garzón Roger** and **José Martínez Llopart**. Other possible approaches became very dark and stale to the game.

The number of possible capture is multiple, and there is not established any limit. The capture step only requires that there is an empty square (as in draughts) behind the pawn taken. The capture can be simultaneously forward, sideward and backward. This implies that in the live game one can capture even 3 or 4 pieces at once, in one move.

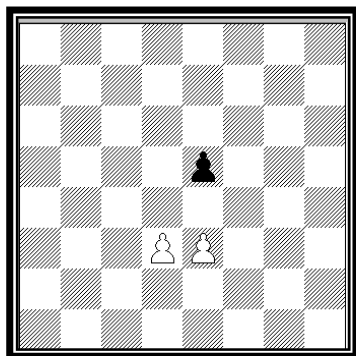


Capturing is mandatory but not absolutely obligatory. Failure in the capture gives a possibility to the opponent to blow²⁹ the pawn and to make a move. Analyzing this game it is perceived that the huff (blowing) here makes more sense than in the draughts games. Interestingly one should analyze the fact in the draughts game why players often evoked the practice of blowing, which is not part of its

²⁹ **COVARRUBIAS, SEBASTIAN DE** (1611). Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española. Madrid, 1611. Edición de Martín de Riquer de la Real Academia Española, Editorial Alta Fulla, Barcelona, 1987. **CALVO, RICARDO (1987)**. Alfonso X El Sabio. Libros del Ajedrez, Dados y Tablas. Patrimonio Nacional. Coedición de Vicent García Editores (Valencia) y Ediciones Poniente (Madrid), 1987, p. 145.

original rules. This may be an evidence, as a trace, of its connection with the alquerque-12 game.

Basic final with option of triumph (shown below) in the alquerque-12 game.



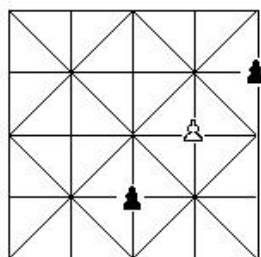
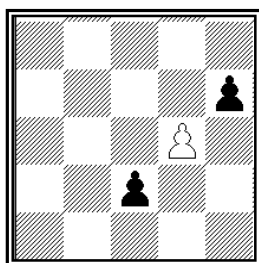
Draw on the board of 8x8

The limits of a 5x5 checkered board by moving the alquerque-12 on it³⁰, allow in many cases the victory, such as Garzón found out with

³⁰ In making this transfer Garzón had a wonderful feeling, perhaps similar to what the pioneers teachers must have had, who made the same test many centuries ago. Since in the alquerque game, developed on the lines, the movement is limited only to the strokes of those same lines and there exist places where there is no diagonal movement (no lines in the alquerque board), apparently this would mean that there might be some confusion on the bicoloured board. **But the magic lines of alquerque, its quadrature, its course and its cross, highlight the miracles of clarity, ounce transferred to the chess board, as if it were a magical or divine play!** On a 5x5 chessboard the movement of the pieces will just be determined by the colour of the squares: if the right square is black and the pieces are occupying a black square, then such pieces have the complete alquerque movement (forward, diagonal, sideward and backward), however if the pieces are occupying a white square, then the pieces will lose the diagonal movement. With this simple rule the alquerque game can be practiced on a chessboard. Surprising fact, and it also introduces new confirmatory elements, as discussed below, the evolutionary connection: alquerque-andarraya-draughts. On the chessboard the alquerque game takes a new complexion that was not appreciated in its lined representation: funny game where the power of the pieces depends on the colour of the square. In order to exhaust the endgame positions we have found a saving position for the weak side

his friend Martinez Llopart. Therefore the wise King Alfonso X says that, he who does not care his pieces is defeated. **The small material advantage of a pawn can provide the victory**³¹. The matched finals (2 pawns against , 3-against-3) are usually ending in a draw (so says the wise king: If both players know to play, often there is a draw. We saw it was necessary to practice to form an adequate opinion. The alquerque-12 is a subtle and wit game that could be systematized (to a lesser extent, than the draughts game).

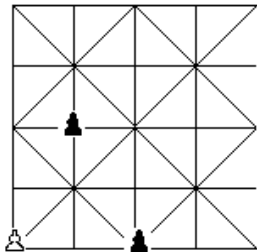
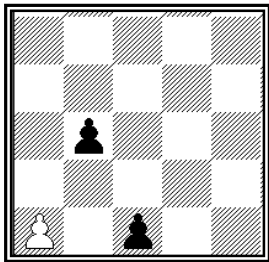
Endgame 1



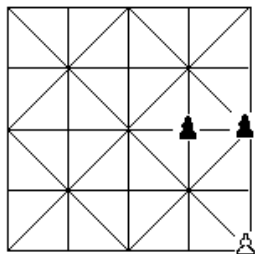
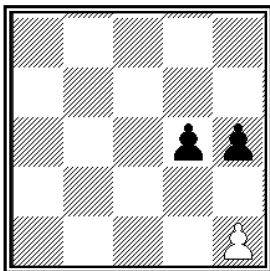
(endgame 4).) By transferring the game from the lined board of 5x5 to the chessboard the game lends itself to systematization and wins in analytical rigor.

³¹ But there was still a problem of the lack of diagonal movement in 12 squares on the board (all of the same colour) and most likely test were made to extend the diagonal movement to all the squares of the board. Then the exact movements no longer depended on the colour of the squares, and it was so a genuine attribute of all pieces. The basic endgame of 2 to 1 is now absolutely a win and it is enough to place a piece in the center square c3 (the holy or sacred line to the Romans, the main diagonal of the draughts game, and even existing in the alquerque 3 game or noughts and crosses). At some point the game switched to the 8x8 board, playing on the coloured squares with the exclusive diagonal move of the alquerque (also backward and, therefore, no coronation). The endgame of 2 to 1 now inevitably and easily wins, which characterizes the strategy of the whole game. Is this the possible evolutionary origin of andarraya?

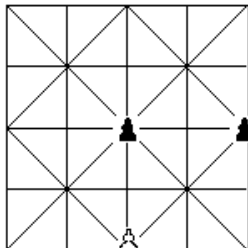
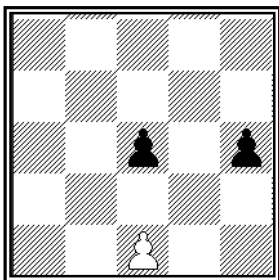
Endgame 2



Endgame 3



Endgame 4



The Endgames 1 to 3.

In all these positions (2 against 1) of the endgames 1 to 3 the weaker site must move and cannot avoid the immediate loss. Worthwhile is the

endgame 1, where one can extract the idea of the the strokes and lines of the alquerque: the victory is achieved by the absence of the diagonal movement in the while squares. The alignment of three in a row is surprising.

The Endgame 4.

An important position of 2 against 1 is that one of the endgame 4, because this endgame can always force cases. However, whoever's turn, white will achieve a draw, as a minutious analysis confirms.

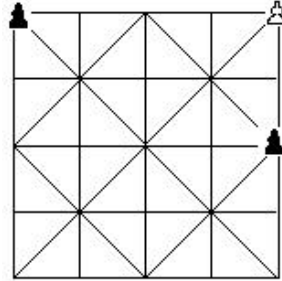
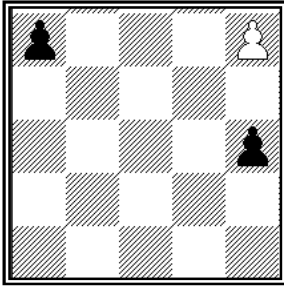
Analogically transferred to the chessboard³² (8x8) one cannot win the endgame, because the stronger side is unable to carry the pieces to the black lines. The victory is obtained, in the cases mentioned and similar positions. Thus with the help of strokes or board limits which did not allow double capture by the black opponent. Although most unlikely, the endgame 1 might arise in practice as winner on the chess board of 8 x 8. Therefore one should avoid reaching the endgame 4 and consequently the stronger side should think well before the latest simplification (endgame 3 against 2) and reach a winning endgame (see diagrams of the endgames 1-3).

These rules were tested and validated in these terms described in the meeting of José Antonio Garzón Roger with José Martínez Llopart dated August 2, 2003. It became also clear that he who opened the game had a worse game, and the first maneuvers are intended to level the game. For the sake of clarity and educational purposes only, sacrificing correction (if necessary), Garzons transcribes the first alquerque-12 party, that he developed with fidelity to the standard rules as prescribed in the book of the King Alfonso X the Wise (1283):

1.d3-c3 b3xd3 2.e3xc3 b4-b3 3.b2xb4 b5xd3 (double capture in b4 y c3) **4.e2-e3 e4xe2 5.e1xc3** (double capture in e2 y d3) **d4xb2 6.a1xc3 a3xa1 7.b1-b2 a4-a3 8.b2-b3 c5-d4 9.c3xe3** (double capture in c4 y d4) **a3xe1** (double capture in b3 y d2) **10.d1-d2 e1xc3**

³² Transferred to the chess board, but with the same rules as alquerque-12.

**11.c2xc4 d5-c5 12.c4-c3 c5-b4 13-e3-e2 b4xd2 14.c1xe3 a1-b2
15.e3-d2 b2-c1 16.e2-e3 (?) e5-e4 17.e3xe5 c1xe3**



Alcanzando en final básico (2 contra 1) y en posición ganadora como ahora demostramos.

18.e5-d5 a5-b5 19.d5-e5 b5-b4! 20.e5-d5 e3-d3 21.d5-c5 (21.d5-e5 b4-c5 y gana: ver final 2) 21...b4-a5 22-c5-d5 (22.c5-c4 a5-b5 gana; Final 1) a5-b5 23.d5-e5 b5-c5 24-e5-e4 d3-d4 ganando(final 2)

The next step in Spain was a game where alquerque pawns were put on a chessboard (here we have practiced it with boards for the reader's better understanding, but always with the rules of alquerque-12), applying a new rule: you could only play diagonally forward or backward. Thus in the final 2 to 1 on an 8x8 board (andarraya) there is always a winner. The knowledge of that analytical truth, which was already searched in alquerque, defines the game strategy, as will happen with the king knowing the end called *la forzosa* where 3 kings, with the main diagonal already conquered, inexorably impose on 1 king. Knowing the basic ends is the first step to mastering these games.

For these reasons we see the alquerque as a clever and enjoyable game to practice. It does seem like a precedent of checkers to us, but there is a missing link between both games: the existence of andarraya mid-fifteenth century was a great find, as it evolutionarily coincides in time

and meets the intermediate characteristics between alquerque and checkers.



Checkerboard

DAMA (LADY)

1529 Paris (un damyer)

Ernest Coyecque, *Recueil d'actes notariés*, Paris, 1905 (see Index). It is in a notarised inventory now in the Minutier central des notaires de Paris (Archives nationales).

1531 au château de Pont-d'Ain dans la Bresse ("un damier")

Jean-Michel Mehl, *Les jeux au royaume de France du XIIIe au début du XVIe siècle*, Paris, 1990, p. 146

found in the inventory of Margaret of Austria's castle in the Bresse (now dept. Ain).

1555, Nérac (S.W. of France), in the Albret castle we have (another inventory):

Ung tablier à jouer aux dames garny de petites platines d'argent ouvrées et de nacre de perles (Havard, *Dictionnaire de l'ameublements*)

1573, J. Dupuys & J. Nicot, *Dictionnaire françois et latin*, Paris.

Dames, C'est une espece de ieu qui se ioue sur l'eschicquier du tablier et damier avec deux bandes [= teams!] chacune de douze tables [draughtsmen] de chacun costé, lesdictes bandes diversifiées par deux couleurs, scrupi. B.

1616 Gustavus Selenus (1579 - 1666)

Gustavus Selenus (Augustus von Braunschweig und Lüneburg pseudonym, wrote about checkers (Selenus, 1616). We find the term "Konig Spiel" in the title of his book again in *Vergilius* (1550, Lib II:124; 1663, Lib II:255).

Ebener massen erwehnet Bernardin: Rutilius J.C. in Vitis Veterum JC Torum, in vitâ P. Mutij Scaevolae, pág: 197,198. eines Spieles von zwelf steinen welches dieser fúrtrefliche Jurist sehr künstlich sol gespielet haben und möchte vielleicht (so ferne nicht das jehnige Spiel so man bei uns das Dammen Spiel nennet und auf einem Schach Brete mit vier und zwanzig nemlich zwelf weissen und zwelf schwarzen runde steinen welche auf sechs zwerch=linien jeh vier Steine auf einer linie in vier und zwanzig felder von gleicher farbe gesetzt und zwo ledige zwerch=linien zwischen diese beide Hauffen gelassen werden spielet darunter verstanden wird) der Alte Schach (dessen beschreibung drunten im neunten Cap: des letzten Buches zu befinden) ausz welchem dieser zu unserer zeit gebrauchliche genommen und auf uns gebracht gemeined sein: Dan man in demselben zwolf haupt und zwelf geringere Steine gebrauchet: doch kan man nientes gewisses davon schliessen: es sind gedanken und geben in etwas nachdencken: man mag folgende Authores, alsz Theod: Zvvingerum, in seinem Theatro Humanae vitae, Volum: 21. lib: 3. pag: 3738. 3786. Ciceronem lib: 1. de Orat: und Quintilianum, lib: 12, deszwegen noch auffschlagen.

Translation:

This way Bernardin (.....) also mentions: pages 197, 198, a game with 12 pieces, which would highlight this excellent jurist and maybe this game was (if not the same game we call checkers, played on a chessboard with 24 pieces: that is, 12 white and 12 black round pieces, in 6 diagonals, placing 4 pieces in each row, in 24 boxes of the same color and with two empty rows between both groups of pieces) the old chess (which is described below, in the ninth chapter of the last book) from which the current chess developed: however, this game uses 12 major pieces and 12 less important ones: but you

cannot say anything with certainty, those are thoughts to regard; these writings can be checked out, Theodo: (...)



Gustavus Selenus

1651 Georg Philipp Harsdörffer

Cap. X die 37. Aufgabe (p. 422/423)

In dem Dammspiel seinem Gegner in einem Damm die 10 Stein oder 6 Dammen auf einen Zug zu nehmen und die 12 schliessen. Die Steine müssen darnach gesetzt seyn und sind allhier die Felder soviel derselben dienen zu leichtern Verstand dieses Stückleins mit der Zahlordnung verzeichnet. Die vier weissen Steine sind 6, 11, 40 and 50 eine Damm gestellet wie hier zu sehen. Die 6 schwarzen Dammen sind mit 2 Ringen bemercket und darunter bleiben an ihren Orten stehen 25, 34, 36 - (6-15), 2. springt über 11 in 20 - (40-47), 8 über 15 in 22. Alsdann ziehet 50 in 41, 56 über 47 in 38, und springt über 34, über 20, 22, 38, 36 und schliesset 25 ein. Doch man musz bedingen dasz man nehmen musz, und dasz der mit den weissen Steinen anziehet. (Harsdörffer, 1651).

Traducción libre:

in checkers capture your opponent with a lady, 10 pieces, or six ladies in one move blocking the 12. You must place the pieces as follows and for this reason there are numbers on each square to easily put the pieces in their place. The white pieces are placed in 6, 11, 40 and there is a lady at 50 as you can see here. The six black ladies are indicated with two rings and stay in their places 25, 34, 36. The whites play 6-15. The black in 2 jumps over 11 to 20. The white plays 40-47. The black in 8 jumps over 15 to 22. So the white plays 50 to 41. The black in 56 jumps over 47 to 38. The white jumps over 34, over 20, 22, 38, 36, and blocks the black piece in 25. Capturing is mandatory and the white starts the game.

UNKNOWN BOARD GAMES

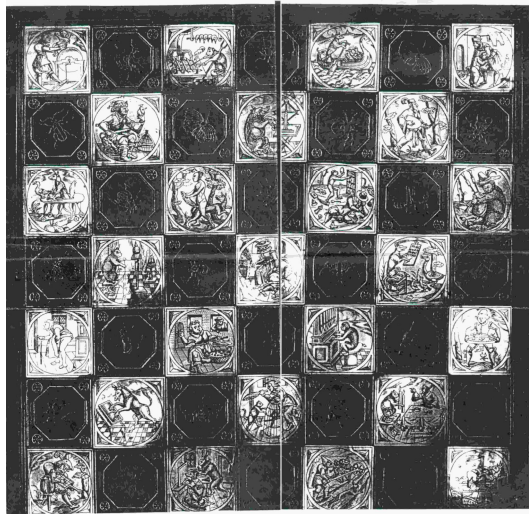
Stones with oblique lines and in Chess form.



German Reinhard Tiersch has provided us with an illustration of a couple practicing an unknown board game, referring to the Burgkloster monastery in Lubeck whose construction was completed in 1350. On the other hand he has sent us other illustrations, telling us that in the east of Brandenburg between Uckermark and Niederlausitz there are at least 20 churches with stones in the shape of a chessboard. The meaning of the stones was not known until now and has been addressed by Prof. Dr. Joachim Petzold³³.

³³ **PETZOLD, JOACHIM** (1997) Rochade, No. 12, December. The German text is: “Vor einer voreiligen Schlussfolgerung, dass wir steinernen Zeugnisse des Schachspiels vor uns haben, muss zunächst einmal gewarnt werden. Nicht alle Steine können als Schachbretter gedeutet werden. Viele sind geschrägt oder stimmen mit der Felderzahl nicht überein. Das korrespondiert mit den Wappen der Zeit. Man

Prof. Dr. K.F. Kerrebijn has provided us with a board game with 7x7 frames, which is probably originally from the German city of Augusburg of the early seventeenth century. Professor tells us that there are similar boards of 8x8 squares in the Museums of Berlin, Hamburg, Braunschweig, and Dresden, taking interest in the use of such boards, which is unknown for us now.

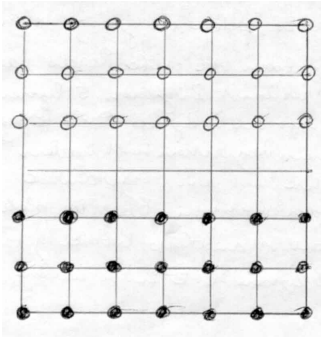


Unknown board

spricht zwar von "geschachten" Wappenbildern. Aber eine derartige schwarz-weise Musterung hat nur ausnahmsweise direkt etwas mit dem Schach zu tun. Ausserdem wäre es denkbar, dass auf andere Brettspiele Bezug genommen wurde". Translation: Before coming to the conclusion that we have stone monuments of chess in front of us, first of all a warning. Not all stones can be indicated as chessboards. Many are skewed or do not match the number of fields. This corresponds with the coat of arms of the time. Indeed we speak of chess coat of arms. But such black-white patterning has only exceptionally directly something to do with chess. It would also be conceivable that reference has been made to other boardgames".

PETZOLD, JOACHIM (1998) Rochade, No. 9, September. The professor tried again and referred to the issue as a married couple playing chess. However, according to Tiersch the illustration expansion does not show a chessboard, but a board with oblique lines, and he wonders if this game could have been andarraya.

TABLO



This game is probably much like the game 'castro', but one cannot move backwards. We will give a summary here as the authors Itkonen³⁴ and Pirak³⁵ describe:

It was drawn by lines on a board with a knife, a box with a total of 36 painted boxes and 21 pieces are used. Each player has three lines on his side with a total of 21 pieces placed on the intersections as shown in the image. The middle line is left out with no pieces. It can only be moved forward in a straight line or left and right. One cannot move backwards. When the black player opens the game and moves his piece forward in the beginning, the opponent has to jump and capture the black piece, and then the black one jumps and captures the white piece. One keeps playing and capturing pieces until one of the players inevitably puts the pieces of his opponent in the corner in the final stage, eventually capturing them.

³⁴ **Itkonen, T.I.** (1941) Die Spiele, Unterhaltungen und Kraftproben der Lappen. Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne, 51, 4

³⁵ **PIRAK, ANTA** (1937) En nomad och hans liv. Uppsala. (Originaltitel: Jahtee saamee viessom)

CHAPTER 20

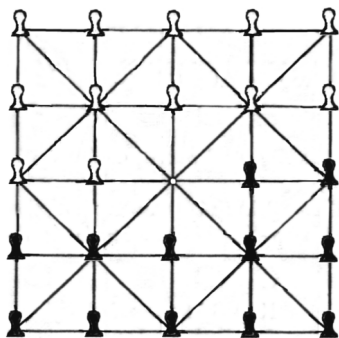
The influence of chess on draughts

*The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious.
It is the source of all true art and science.*

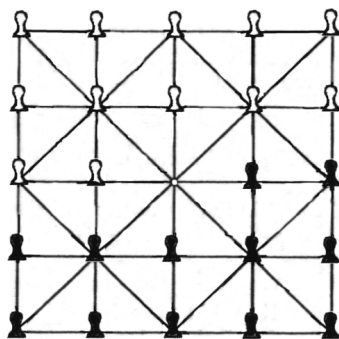
ALBERT EINSTEIN

Before explaining how the new draughts game had been developed from chess in Valencia it is convenient to know something about its precursory games that we consider to be the alquerque game and the andarraya game. For that we refer to the corresponding chapters.

In 1283 King Alfonso X the Wise wrote on the game of alquerque of twelve, of which the rules we find in the chapter on Alquerque. For Spain we should consider that there were different kingdoms between the XIII and XV centuries that are interesting for us to know: the kingdom of Aragón, the kingdom of Castile, and the kingdom of Granada. We see the following development in the games:



**Alquerque (Morris) of twelve game
(kingdom of Castile and Granada)**



**Marro (Morris) game
(kingdom of Aragón)**

The historian José Antonio Garzón has for a long time played the game of alquerque of twelve with another outstanding chess player, his friend José Martínez Llopart to verify the rules given by King Alfonso X the Wise. First the King clearly says in his text from 1283 that the pawns move in any direction in rectum³⁶ on lines. Namely as much forward as backward. In the same sense it is possible to capture forward or backward and the number of pawns captured in a jump can be up to 3. Coming towards the end a game of 2 pawns against 1 pawn is mostly gained, although there are exemptions. There was no promotion in the game. The capture is obligatory but not absolutely necessary. If it is not realized, the rival can blow off the piece³⁷. The following step in Spain has been a game where they put the pawns of the game of alquerque on a chessboard, applying the new rule that it was only possible to play diagonally forward or backward. Thus in the end 2 pawns also win against 1 adversary³⁸ pawn. Other rules, according to Mr. Garzón, were exactly the same as in the game of alquerque, even blowing. It then depended on the place where one was living whether it was played on lines or on a chessboard. Since there was no habit of playing chess, the lines were drawn then in the soil with a few small sticks and the small stones were used as pawns. That is to say one was playing in the same style as the game of alquerque of twelve. Only in special places it was played on the chessboard.

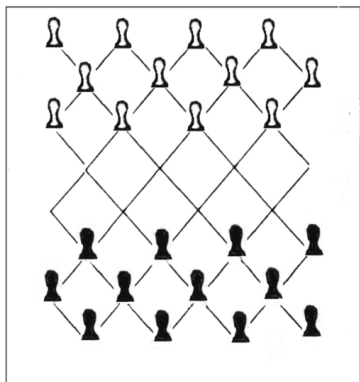
³⁶ Rectum = orthogonal direction and diagonally over the drawn lines

³⁷ **COVARRUBIAS, SEBASTIAN DE** (1611) *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*. Madrid, 1611. Edición de Martín de Riquer de la Real Academia Española, Editorial Alta Fulla, Barcelona, 1987. **CALVO, RICARDO** (1987). *Alfonso X El Sabio. Libros del Ajedrez, Dados y Tablas*. Patrimonio Nacional. Coedición de Vicent García Editores (Valencia) y Ediciones Poniente (Madrid), 1987. P. 145

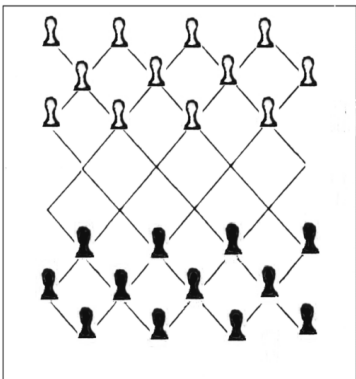
³⁸ The historian José Antonio Garzón observes that transferring the alquerque of twelve to the board of chess (8 x 8) and using all the squares the endgame cannot be gained by 2 against 1 pawns since the strong edict turns out to be unable to take to the bands the black. The victory is obtained helped by the bands or limits of the board that prevent a double apprehension on part of the black. He believes that for this motive one was going to use in the XV century only diagonals to continue gaining the game with two pawns against one.

The first reference that we have relating to a game that looks already similar enough to a game of chess (but is different) is the text that comes in Juan Alonso de Baena from 1432 where Juan Alonso de Baena wanted a response from Mister Cañisares, because Juan Alonso saw in the game of chess of Cañisares nothing else than a game of lines. From this text we can already extract that there was a game played on a chessboard that one can possibly confuse with a line game.

Juan's text comes from 1454 where one says: **"that I should not return behind in the manner of the andarraya"**. References in other years were demonstrating that the abovementioned game of andarraya was looking very similar to draughts. We have made clear with proofs in chapter 6 that the word **punta** is nothing else than diagonal in the game of **Marro de punta**. Therefore the Andarraya and Marro de punta were the same games, with the difference that each kingdom in Spain had its own terminology. Playing on lines we have:

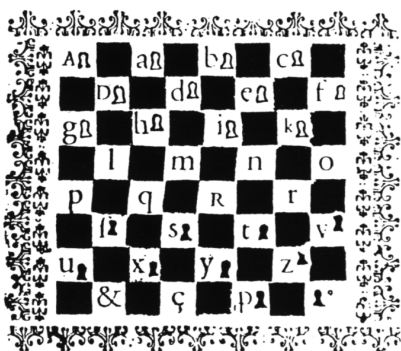


Andarraya
(kingdom of Castile)

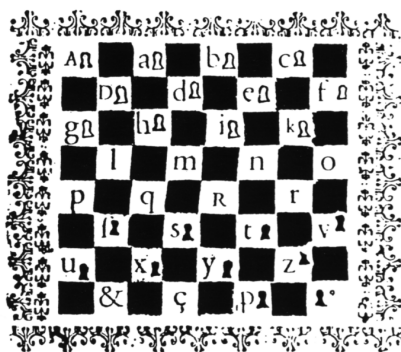


Marro de Punta
(kingdom of Aragon)

And playing on a chessboard we then have:



Andarraya
(kingdom of Castile)



Marro de Punta
(kingdom of Aragon)

Neither in this game was promotion. The pawns, equal as in the game of alquerque, could move diagonally forward and backward. Thus coming towards the end a game of 2 pawns against 1 pawn was normally gained.

During the last quarter of the XV century the Queen of the game of chess, who generally was representing an image of Virgin Mary³⁹, suffered in her attributions in the abovementioned game a series of changes, all of them directed to awarding major power and definitively major mobility on the board. The motive of the change was going to centre itself in the person of the Catholic queen Isabel. The figures in the game of chess are equal as in Cessolis based on the real life. My argument⁴⁰ was that the queen Isabel here was "the general" who should be present in any part of her territory by horse. Her power is expressed on the board (territory) and afterwards on the draughts board

³⁹ **PETZOLD, DR. JOACHIM.** Das Königliche Spiel, Die Kulturgeschichte des Schach, Verlag W. Kohlhammer GmbH, Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln, Mainz, 1987. Page 158

⁴⁰ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno. P. 218

in general. This is something mysterious until now for many people who study the history of chess and the origin of draughts.

The men of the Aiddle Ages and the Renaissance had sharp awareness of the universalism of the images of the game, of its relation with the time and the future, the destination, the state power, and its value as cosmovision. In this way they were interpreting the chess pieces, the figures, and the colours of the letters and the dice. The kings and queens of a festival were chosen often with the dice, and the biggest luck was named *basilicus* or *real*. The images of the games were considered to be a concentrated and Universalist formula of life and the historical process, happiness - misfortune, ascent - fall, profit - loss, coronation - overthrow. A species of life in miniature was beating in the games in a very simple way.

Besides, the game was allowing man to go out of the conventional patterns, was liberating him of the laws and rules, was allowing him to replace the current conventions by other more numerous ones, happy and light moments. This particular conception of the game that existed in the beginning of the XVI century should be rigorously taken into consideration. The game had not turned still into a simple fact of the daily life, loaded with pejorative tones. It was preserving its value of conception of the world⁴¹.

I do not understand Valencian, which is the language of the poem *Scachs d'amor*, but I was sure that the poem had metaphors in relation to queen Isabel. The chess istorian José Antonio Garzón had happily translated some rhymes for me and so I paid attention to determine the date in rhyme 54. Precisely the detail of the sword granted to the queen, as exists in the rhyme of *Scachs d'amor*, can only refer to the very same queen Isabel, because it was not a custom to grant a sword to any queen. This valuable information from the poem implies that the poem was written after 1474. It must then be the case that the poets

⁴¹ **MOLINA MOLINA, ANGEL LUIS** (1997-1998) Los juegos de mesa de Edad Media. Miscelanea Medieval Murciana, p 218.

of Valencia who wrote the poem had enormous respect for queen Isabel, whom they wanted to symbolize in the new powerful dama.

In the chapter of *Scachs d'amor* we see that all the poets had good friendship with King Fernando and that they were important personages in the cultural life of Valencia, while with their occupations they were assured of important public positions. It is true that we do not have proofs, but it is common sense to suppose that they had spoken on several occasions with King Fernando about changing the rules in chess. The king, who was a great fan of chess, should agree on changing the rules, but without publicity, because the society of the time still was not ready for a definitive change. There were many matters still pending, such as the unification with Aragon and before all the conquest of Granada, because the Queen wanted to have only one religion in whole Spain.



Los árabes en España

The period between 1474 and 1492, I think, was the dormant one in which the **new powerful dama** was developed basing itself on the powerful Spanish queen (movement of the queen). The sudden and definitive implantation was realized in 1492, a year known in the books as the most important in the history of Spain. The victory of the Moors made a new queen with more power possible. Spain now gave its crowned piece the definitive name of dama. Thus the word dama, which is of French origin and was almost not used any more on the board in France, relives in Spain.



The queen Isabel la Católica as symbol of the new powerful dama in the draughts game, in my book “ Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero, 1990

We are going to expose some considerations with regard to the city of Valencia where the new powerful dama was invented in the chess game and where the draughts game is born with the vulgar name of Marro de punta. Valencia was a city known internationally for its games houses. The excessive love for games in which money easily

flows was fomented in the final years of the Middle Ages by three factors according to Professor Angel Molina Molina⁴²:

1. The work conditions of the epoch allowed enough free time, which favoured urban sociability and people meeting, and among the favourite activities that occupied free time were the gambling games of raffles, playing cards, and especially the terrible dice, which provoked serious alterations of the civil order, tumults, fights, blasphemies, etc.

2. It was very difficult to attack this situation provoked by the game for constituting, together with its Babylonian brothel and its streets full of prostitutes, one of the biggest attractions that the city was offering to the natives and visitors. Besides that the port of Grao possessed several game boards on which the sailors and merchants were touching their fortune. In the city the cheap hotels and bars of the parishes of San Juan of the Market, San Martin, and San Andrés were opening their doors to gamblers of any type; but he who wanted to play with guarantees had to frequent houses of certain prestige where persons of calibre would come.

3. Finally it is necessary to emphasize the own connivance of urban justice that made profit from the prescription of certain games and supported with impunity its protectorate on the Valencian gambling houses although it was not always like that, and the proprietors of the game houses and the players were sometimes fined.

With this I deem it sufficiently proven that in the XV century Valencia, a city of between 80,000 – 100,000 inhabitants, was a place where people played very much. Therefore Valencia was equally the right place to practise a new game and to acquire profound knowledge of it, precisely due to the large quantity of people living in Valencia.

⁴² **MOLINA MOLINA, ANGEL LUIS** (1999) El juego de dados en la Edad Media. En: *Murgetana*, Nº 100, Pp. 95 – 104. Los datos son sacados de: Pablo Pérez García: *La comparsa de los malhechores. Un ensayo sobre la criminalidad y la justicia urbana en la Valencia preagermanada (1479 – 1518)*, Diputación de Valencia, 1990, pp. 83-93

The draughts game, as we see it in Juan Timoneda's book, is at such a high level that by force it needed 20 or 30 years to develop and so it is now clear why the game came to such high level.

If the three Valencian poets were not converted Jews, they were at least related and progeny of them. Castellví was a son of the converted Violant d'Esplugues, the surname of Fenollar also is Hebrew in its connotations. Part of the political success of Vinyoles explains his close relation with a powerful group of converted Jews: the Santángel clan. Luis de Santángel was the most powerful banker of the kingdom of Aragon, and King Ferdinand frequently depended on his money and advice. It was Santángel who financed the Cristóbal Columbus's first expedition. Vinyoles remained related by having married Brianda de Santángel, a carnal niece of the great financier. Brianda was the daughter of Berenguer de Santángel, Luis's brother⁴³. The Castellví family became connected with the Jewish Santángel clan, obeying the rule of bourgeois integration. Alfonso, the third son of the great banker Luis de Santángel, married the daughter of the owner of the town of Carlét, Jerónima de Castellví⁴⁴.

It is known in the documents that Luis de Santángel gave an account of one million hundred forty thousand duchies which were sent to the archbishop of Granada to finance the expenses of the expedition of Columbus (order of May 2, 1492). Santángel anticipated this money on account of the rent of the rights to the Genoese in Valencia. This borrowing is confirmed in a document of August 19, 1494. So it remains clear that the money for the expedition came from the revenues of the Catalan - Aragonese Crown. Luis de Santángel was an immensely rich man who was at this moment of the year 1492 the salvation for the queen, because with the war of Granada the queen⁴⁵

⁴³ **CALVO, RICARDO** (1997) Lucena: La evasión en ajedrez del converso Calisto. Pp. 103-104

⁴⁴ **CALVO, RICARDO** (1999) El poema Scachs d'amor. (Siglo XV). Análisis y comentarios por Ricardo Calvo. P. 35

⁴⁵ Francisco Martínez Martínez, in his work *The discovery of America* he says " ... the excellent Castilian queen could not get into debt, far from it to sell, her jewelry, as she could not have disposal of it due to having it deposited in Valencia".

had become moneyless and now Castile was economically completely dependent on Valencia. Due to the Agreement of Segovia of 1475 Castile could not use the officials of the Crown of Aragon since they were foreigners for it. Thus the crown of Aragon made capitulations⁴⁶ with Columbus, who later always went to the king, or to both, but never went to the queen alone.

Once America was discovered, Luis de Santángel and the poets could influence King Ferdinand to print a work on modern chess. The time at the end of 1492 was now the right moment for a modern nation: discovery of America, conquest of Granada, expulsion of the Jews, and the administrative reforms to remove the power to the nobility. Now was the time to teach the world the new chess and one may suppose that queen Isabel⁴⁷ and king Fernando finally authorized printing of this work in 1493, by which the chess player Francesch Vicent occupied himself and since Valencia had economically helped the Queen so much, it was allowed to print the work in Valencian as a reward for so much collaboration. There is no doubt that the topic of the work of the new powerful dama in chess was discussed in many intellectual circles of Spain and Elio Antonio de Nebrija found out that in Valencia they were definitively reforming the game of chess and andarraya with the new powerful dama.

Nebrija, who before Columbus's trip had informed the queen of the advantages⁴⁸ of grammar by means of the bishop of Hernando de

⁴⁶ When Columbus claims in 1497 an official assertion to the Kings of the Capitulations signed in 1492, the monarchs do it as Kings of Aragon.

⁴⁷ The queen was very conceited and liked the reputation and honours. That is to say it was a matter to adequately present the project. Who was better than the same Antonio de Nebrija?

⁴⁸ "The third profit of my work can be that when in Salamanca I gave the sample of that work to Her Royal Highness, and she asked me why it would be useful, the very reverend father Bishop of Avila snatched my response, and answering for me he said that later when her Highness could submit under her yoke many barbarian peoples and nations of outlandish languages, and with the defeat those had needed to receive the laws that the victor makes for the defeated one, and with them our language, then by my art they might acquire knowledge of it, so as we now learn the art of the Latin grammar to learn Latin".

Talavera, saw in his dictionaries another way to teach the laws that the victor (Spain) puts to defeated (Granada) or to the entire world.

Valencian production of chess and draughts

| Year | Title | Authors |
|-------|---|-----------------------|
| | MODERN CHESS | |
| 1475? | El poema de scachs d'amor ⁴⁹ | Various |
| 1495 | Libre del jochs partits ⁵⁰ | Francesch Vicent |
| 1497 | Repetición: de amores: E arte, de axedres con CL juegos de partido ⁵¹ | Lucena |
| | DRAUGHTS (MARRO GAME) | |
| 1547 | El ingenio, o juego de marro, de punta o damas ⁵² | Antonio de Torquemada |
| 1591 | Libro de damas, vulgarmente nombrado el marro | Pedro Ruiz Montero |
| 1597 | Libro de juego de las damas, por otro nombre el marro de punta, dividido en tres tratados | Lorenzo Valls |
| 1635 | Libro llamado ingenio, el qual trata del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda ⁵³ | Juan Timoneda |

It is so that in 1495, the year of Francesch Vicent's work, we also see a Castilian - Latin dictionary from Nebrija with the terms "dama es casi señora - domina" (**dama** is almost lady – domina) and "andarraia - calulorum ludus" with behind these words put in Latin "**novum**" that

⁴⁹ CALVO, RICARDO (1999) El poema scachs d'amor (Siglo XV)

⁵⁰ GARZÓN ROGER, JOSÉ ANTONIO (2001) En pos del incunable perdido Francesch Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partits dels schachs, Valencia, 1495

⁵¹ GARZÓN ROGER, JOSÉ ANTONIO (2001) Pp. 113-145. En pos del incunable perdido Francesch Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partits dels schachs, Valencia, 1495. The work of Lucena was much influenced by the city of Valencia. As we learn from Garzon's work Lucena owed a lot of his work to Francesch Vicent and on the other hand the German printer Leornard Hutz who was living in Valencia decided to move to Salamanca to join Lope Sanz printing the work of Lucena in 1497.

⁵² I believe that this book has never existed. More information in chapter 24

⁵³ The book of Timoneda has texts from ca. 1518 and I think that this was the book published in 1547

cannot be anything other than new. According to Nebrija Spain⁵⁴ had to teach the entire world its culture.

One may suppose that the work of Francesh Vicent had its success in the chess players' circles of Aragon and Italy and the climate was now appropriate, with intellectuals like Nebrija to its favor, to have a work in the Castilian language as soon as possible. Then Spain might spread the work in Castile and in other places of the world, one more way of demonstrating its power. It was therefore necessary to find a person with wide knowledge of the Castilian and Valencian languages to prepare the work in Castilian. This candidate was found in the person of Lucena, a student in Salamanca who published his work in c. 1497.

Since it is demonstrated that in the work of Lucena there exist 100 compositions of Francesh Vicent we see again how important the city of Valencia was in the diffusion of modern chess. We suppose that in these years there was also implanted a new game that years later people called "el juego de las damas" (draughts). Unfortunately we only have the reference of Nebrija with regard to the game of andarraya and we have to wait till seeing the book of Timoneda⁵⁵. But a relation exists between Francesh Vicent and the texts that appear in the book of Timoneda.

We see in the previous scheme that the books or manuscripts of modern chess were before the books or manuscripts of draughts in Valencia and consistently the game that nowadays we know with the name of draughts was born out of modern chess in Valencia in the following way:

Draughts born out of the game of chess:

1. The draughts board is the board of chess⁵⁶.

⁵⁴ To facilitate the reading we say Spain. Certainly it turns out evident that the Catholic Monarchs never used in their title the form "Kings of Spain", but they always used "*King and Queen of Castile, of León, of Aragon, of Sicilia, of Toledo ...*"

⁵⁵ Timoneda calls the game Marro de punta [again punta], a Valencian term

⁵⁶ Also the game of andarraya, game with lines, has the same diagonals as the chessboard.

2. The names of the pieces and dama in draughts are those of peón and dama (pawn and dama) in the ancient Spanish books of chess and Marro de punta (draughts).
3. The figures of pawn and dama in Marro de punta (draughts) were equal to the figures of pawn and dama in chess. Nowadays these figures have been changed to pieces and double pieces respectively.
4. The movement of pawn and dama in draughts is analogous to that of pawn and dama in chess: the pawn in draughts moves and captures⁵⁷ like the chess pawn only forward⁵⁸; and the dam in draughts can, like the dama in chess, make long movements and capture during the forward and backward moves along the unoccupied squares.
5. There is promotion in the game.
6. The promotion of the pawn in dama in draughts is carried out on the eighth line of the board, analogous to the promotion of the dama in chess.
7. The board in draughts “Spanish way” is drawn in the same way as in chess: the first square on the right side is of white colour. Consistently the longest diagonal is on the right side.
8. In the beginning of the game there is a dama in the square 3 and 30, as we see in the book of Timoneda. It was also possible to play without damas in the beginning.
9. The motive for the introduction of the promotion of the dama in the andarraya game at the beginning of the XVI century in Valencia is due to the tremendous success the new powerful dama had years before in the game of chess in Valencia.
10. The option to blow is eliminated, and now the capture is obligatory. The new game, more scientific and combinative, could not depend on this medieval and archaistic event, as Mr. Garzón correctly indicates.

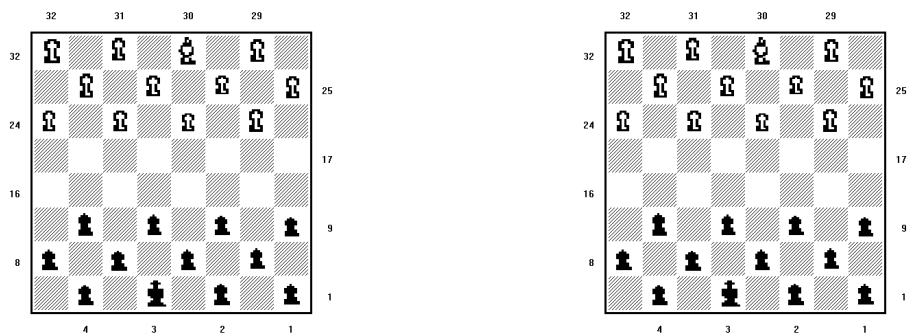
The following phase of Andarraya (Marro de punta was in 1495 a new game, of which the famous Antonio de Nebrija makes mention in his

⁵⁷ We are speaking about the ancient game. Nowadays it is possible to jump forward and backward.

⁵⁸ It diagonally moves forward or like in the Turkish game, orthogonally.

Hispanic - Latin dictionary by means of the introduction of a dama to the game.

We think that the introduction of the dama to the game had to do both with the game of chess and with the game of andarraya, because in the book of Timoneda, the first draughts book in the world, it is stated that it is possible to play in this way and in such case the players put their dama on squares 3 and 30, although it was not obligatory. Nevertheless we think that in this way people started officially playing in 1495 with the new powerful dama after a certain period of practice (the dormant period). We then have:



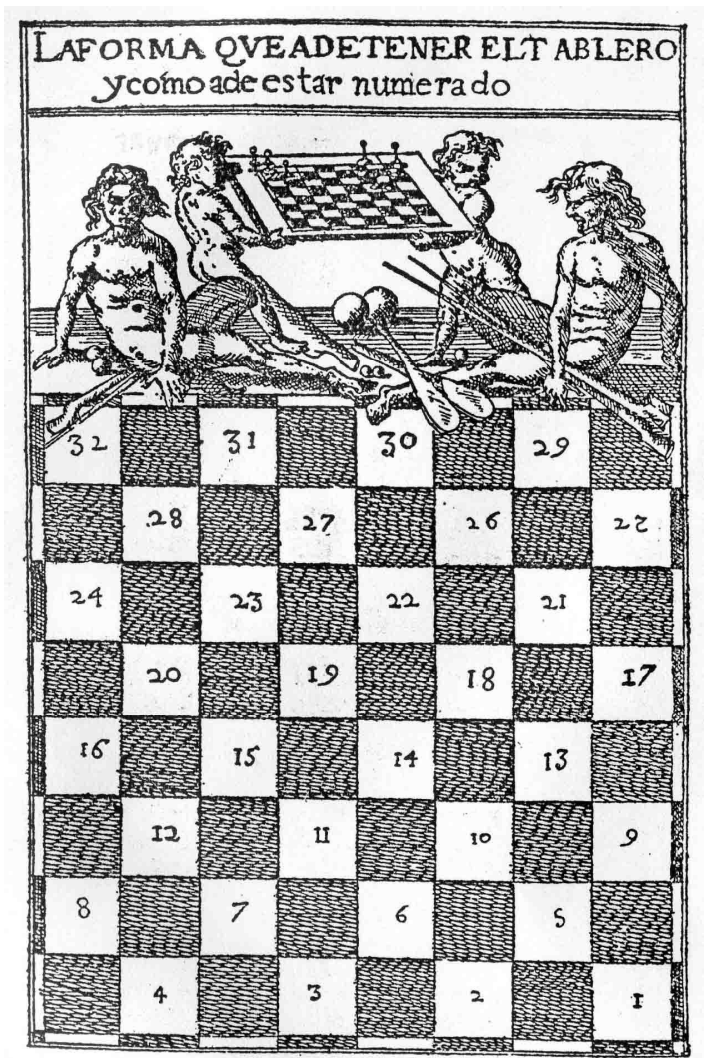
**Andarraya with dama in 3 and 30
(Kingdom of Castile)**

**Marro de Punta with dama in 3 and 30
(Kingdom of Aragon)**

There were many authors (Van der Linde, Branch, Fiske, Credner, Cárceles, Sabater) who believed that the draughts game had been born from chess. Fiske did not forget to mention that the way of capturing pawns in the draughts game is original from the early Asian – European bishop. On the other hand Fiske says that one limited the squares used by the queen and the bishop⁵⁹ in the old chess of Spain, which are only the diagonal squares for the movement of the queen as well as those of the bishop. The present movement of the dama in

⁵⁹ **FISKE, WILLARD** (1905) Chess in Inceland, P. 93

draughts is equal to the modern bishop, which also clearly exposes a Spanish origin and of which we will perhaps speak in future⁶⁰.



Pawns still used in the book of Joseph Carlos Garcez, 1684

⁶⁰ My idea of the new bishop is of that period.

The German Heinz Credner was well oriented when he wrote without too many documents⁶¹ (free translation):

"The original art of the draughts game, with the same certain elements of chess, was invented in Spain around the beginning of the XV century. Then it was practised for a long time in France, England, and Germany. Later different game forms interfered both in France and in Germany, while in England and America it continued in the traditional form⁶²."

I was always sure that the texts in the book of Timoneda were very ancient⁶³ and had to do with the first texts of modern chess. A few years ago I observed in the book: diagrams in the style of Lucena, only problems and ends, notation in lettering to indicate the solution, and the use of ancient words of chess.

Nevertheless, investigating it again with the historian Garzón I realized that Timoneda also had a dama in the beginning of the game, the same as in the game of chess, and that both Timoneda and Lorenzo Valls speak about Marro de punta and **our** (possession) draughts (vulgarly called del marro) respectively.

⁶¹ **CREDNER, HEINZ** (1886) Das Damespiel nach älterer und neuerer Spielweise auf deutsche wie polnische Art., pp. 1- 2

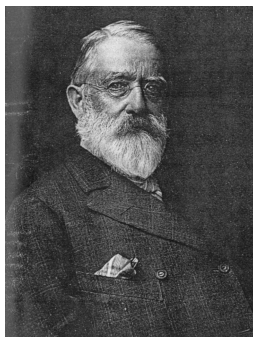
"Die ursprüngliche Art des Damespieles, wie dasselbe aus gewissen Elementen des Schach, hervorgegangen war, ist dan sowohl in Frankreich als auch in England and Deutschland lange Zeite hindurch ausschliesslich in Übung geblieben. Später haben sich jedoch in Frankreich, wie auch in Deutschland, einige mehr oder minder abweichende Spielweisen herausgebildet, während in England und America jene alte Spielart auch heute noch fast durchgehendes herrscht".

⁶² Here Credner is wrong, because the traditional form in Spain was with a long dama and not with a short one, as they play nowadays in England and America.

⁶³ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1986) Het Nieuwe Damspel, No. 3, p. 57. I said: ".....our argument that some draughts books (manuscripts) should have been written in Spain before 1547. We will try to continue our investigations, but it will cost time to come to a definitive definition. We hope to be able to prove our hypothesis that Antonio de Torquemada's lost book of 1547 was not the first draughts book in Spain".



Antonio Van der Linde



William Fiske



Dr. Manuel Sabater

The term "**our**" refers undoubtedly to the city of Valencia. Now we happily have a study thoroughly done by the historian Garzón and his investigations were so important that it was necessary to dedicate a chapter to his findings, because they are the definitive proofs that the draughts game - formerly called marro and marro de punta - has its origin from chess and from Valencia. With at least 14 arguments Garzón magnificently demonstrates the birth of the game of Marro de punta from the game of chess, where the new powerful dama was going to play an important role.

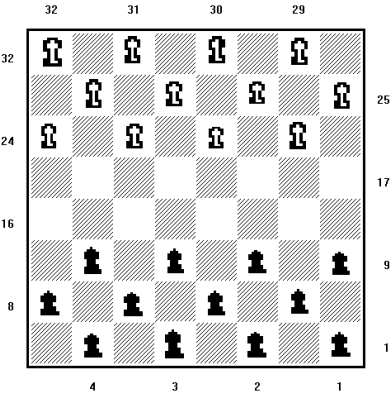
These changes as much in the game of modern chess as in the game of andarraya⁶⁴ were possible, because the city of Valencia had many scholars at its disposal. Spain had one of the principal foci of the Spanish humanism in Valencia that distinguished itself by the diffusion of its contacts with the Italian court of Alfonso V the Magnanimous.

Valencia was the most important capital of Spain with approximately 80,000 inhabitants in the XV century where in 1474 the first printing of Spain was established. The population consisted of 30% Moors in those years and with this number Valencia was the most Moriscos

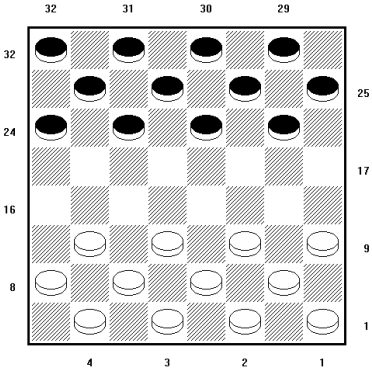
⁶⁴ With andarraya we refer to Castile and we know that in the kingdom of Aragon the abovementioned game was called as the game of "Marro" (Morris) or the game of "Marro de punta" (diagonal morris).

populated kingdom. We may suppose that the game of chess was a game of the rich, noble, and progeny of Jews, while the game of alquerque – later turned into the game of marro de punta, accepted some years later with the name of draughts – was rather a pastime of the humble population: among them Moriscos and priests.

It can be that practising the game of marro de punta [capitalization] (game of andarraya) with damas in the opening was by the time causing the name of juego de las damas (draughts). The first time that we have steadfastness of this is in the title of Pedro Ruiz Montero's book from 1591 that says in the title: “juego de las damas, vulgarmente nombrado el marro”. In 1597 Lorenzo Valls is more exact in the title of his book: "juego de las damas, por otro nombre el Marro de Punta"[check capitalization rules in Spanish and unify capitalization of book titles where necessary across this document for consistency]. The topic is that although it was not obligatory, people continued playing with 1 or 2 damas in the beginning of the game and lost this custom in the next century, as Joseph Carlos Garcez's book from 1684 confirms to us. We also see that people continue playing with pawns in Spain in the draughts game until at least 1684. It seems that from the XVIII century Spain was playing the game with flat pieces, as it does nowadays.



Draughts (1684)
(Spain)



The game nowadays
(Spain)

Before finishing this chapter it is convenient to know more about Spain of 1493 - 1494. Around the year 1494, the epoch in which Cristóbal Columbus had discovered America, Spain with Isabel of Castile was the most powerful country of the world and hastened to show it to the entire world by means of political, economic, and cultural activities. As from 1493 the Queen, free from worries of the war, was submitting herself to the activities so beloved by her father, transforming herself into a generous protector of all sciences and arts. She stimulated the first steps of botany and zoology. Alonso of Cordova dedicated his astronomic tables to her, and, under the patronage of the tutor of prince John, the bishop Diego de Deza. The famous Jewish astrologer Abrahán Zacuto prepared his *Almanach Perpetuum* with tables of the sun, the moon, and the stars, which Columbus used in his trips. The studies of medicine prospered, and the king and queen founded large hospitals in Granada, Salamanca, and Santiago.

One of the tutors of prince John inaugurated a vast field in the studies of archaeology and formed a collection of inscriptions, while professor Antonio de Nebrija was studying the Roman circuses in Merida. Isabel and Fernando founded several universities, the most important of which were those of Salamanca and Alcalá de Henares, where some of the most notable humanists of the Renaissance taught.

The superior studies became so popular that the great scholar Erasmo could write: *"The Spanish have reached such an elevation in literature that not only do they provoke the admiration of the most educated nations of Europe, but besides they serve them as model"*⁶⁵.

With this context we better understand the definitive implantation of the new powerful dama both in the game of chess and in the game of andarraya (forming the new game of draughts, although at the moment the latest one continued with the name of Andarraya and Marro de

⁶⁵ Walsh, W.T. (1963) Isabel la Cruzada. Colección Austral, Espasa-Calpe S.A. - Madrid

punta) around 1493-1495, as well as in the printed chess books of Francesh Vicent (1595) and Lucena (1497).



Antonio de Nebrija

CONCLUSION:

The current draughts game has a long history that began with the game of Morris (Alquerque of 12), was modified in the game of andarraya, and with the introduction of the new powerful dama finally became the current draughts game in Spain, which has been the base of a draughts game played on a board of 100 squares.

With this chapter we have demonstrated that the draughts game - a game with the damas - was born from the game of chess and that for a long time pawns were used in the game, and over time were changed to flat pieces.

At the same time it remains demonstrated that chess cannot have been born from the draughts game, as some historians try to demonstrate. The influence of the draughts game on the game of chess has been minimal.

The game of Morris (with damas) was invented in the city of Valencia about [or around?] 1495 and the first texts of the compositions of problems and ends are from around 1518.

The first news of a game similar to the Andarraya sounded in Spain in 1432. This game was practised without damas and was similar to the draughts game, as described in the book of Timoneda.



**Painting of a board game in Capella Palatina
in Palermo, Sicily (1140-1143)**

CHAPTER 21

The Poem „Scachs d’amor” and Isabella I of Castile

*As an investigator I live from the intuition
and critique is my only faithful partner.*
GOVERT WESTERVELD

The first preserved text about modern chess is the poem *Scachs d’amor* from the XV century. This poem is the first document in which the new *dama* or *queen* appears in the history of chess for the first time. Despite having stated in my last book of 2004 that Queen Isabella had influence on the creation of the powerful new *dama* in the origin of draughts and modern chess, historians of chess and draughts were not taking it seriously and several had reservations about it. Therefore a study of the text *Scachs d’amor* cannot be absent in this book, especially now that we have the results of sensational research by historian José Antonio Garzón Roger at hand.

As Ramon Miquel i Planas (1874-1950) warned in 1914, the real importance of the poem *Scachs d’amor* would not be known until we had a serious study done by a real expert in chess. This work had been done for years by my friend Dr. Ricardo Calvo (1943-2002) whose book⁶⁶ was written in 1999 with the foreword by his friend José Antonio Garzón, another expert in the history of chess and who now continues in the footsteps of Dr. Calvo. Garzon had actively helped Calvo with personal communications in the analysis of this poem.

Dr. Ricardo Calvo was aware of my book and my hypothesis, but our paths separated in 1997 when I decided to deal fully with the history of

⁶⁶ **CALVO, RICARDO** (1999) *El Poema scachs d’amor* (siglo XV). First preserved text about modern Chess. Analysis and comments by Ricardo Calvo. Editorial Jaque XXI, S.L. – Madrid, with prologue by José Antonio Garzón Roger.

my wife's village of Blanca that lies in the beautiful Ricote Valley and which was the last greatest place in Spain where the moriscoes remained in the year 1613. The inhabitants were expressing the need for knowing their history yearly in their festival book of August, but until 1997 nobody was writing about it. So I decided to do that and after one year I had written a nice book of 900 pages. Despite Ricardo's unsuccessful attempts to convince me to continue with the history of draughts I left this project because I needed a break after 10 years of continuous research.

In stanzas X-XIII of the book *Scachs d'amor* Calvo⁶⁷ referred to my hypothesis and briefly said: "The choice of the term was most likely influenced by the figure of Queen Isabella the Catholic", but inexplicably he does not speak in his book on the new strength of the "queen" or "dama" piece that I also attribute to queen Isabella⁶⁸. On the other hand he did not forget to mention⁶⁹ my discovery of the word "dama" in Nebrija's dictionary of 1495, which also took me much time to determine the actual date of the original dictionary of Nebrija⁷⁰,

⁶⁷ **CALVO, RICARDO** (1999) El poema *Scachs d'amor*. (Siglo XV). Análisis y comentarios por Ricardo Calvo. P. 65

⁶⁸ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1994) *Homo Ludens, Der Spielende Mensch IV*. Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule Mozarteum Salzburg, Salzburg. Page 104 says: His movement, which until then was between adjacent squares spread over the entire board. This new capability or "power" of the queen appears to be linked, according to my studies, with the influence on all areas of social, cultural, and political-military at the time, held by the figure of Queen Isabella the Catholic.

⁶⁹ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1997) De invloed van de Spaanse koningin Isabel la Católica op de nieuwe sterke dame in de oorsprong van het dam- en moderne schaakspel. Spaanse literatuur, jaren 1283-1700, p. 217.

⁷⁰ However, the words we find in the dictionary of Nebrija, 1495, are the most interesting ones:

Alquerque Calculorum ludus

Andarraia Calculorum ludus **NOVUM**

Dama es casi señora Domina-ae **NOVUM**

In the dictionary of 1495 **NOVUM** (new) is printed separately and the meanings of these words are new. So as a result of the new dama the long dama with long strokes was definitively introduced at that time in the game of chess. As for the dates, this all

which according to some historians was from 1492 and according to others from 1495.

Calvo knew a lot about the history of Spain and he surely knew that in Spain the queen was an exception for Europe where queens could not govern in the fifteenth century⁷¹. The odd thing is that Calvo at first did not rule out that the new rules in chess of those years could have been derived from the cultural atmosphere created by the powerful new queen Isabella of Castile where the queen played a prominent role, at least as important as her husband Ferdinand of Aragon. But Calvo ended by saying that this is and will remain a matter of speculation⁷².

However, when he wrote the introduction to my book of 1997 he told me that he did believe in this possibility. So the issue is confusing, because Calvo did not continue this line of research. Perhaps there were other elements in his Research that suggested abandoning this line of investigation. I know he had very strong friendship with the German chess historian Egbert Meissenburg who wrote the following about Calvo⁷³:

harmonizes with the three treaties about the new powerful dama in the game of chess (1476 Scachs d'amor, 1495 Franchesch Vicent, and 1497 Lucena).

⁷¹ **A historic amateur asked Calvo:** "I have a couple of questions that you might be able to help me with. I remember reading about a law that was made during the Renaissance that did not allow a woman to be the primary ruler". **Calvo replied:**

"According to the archives of our tribe women were excluded from inheritance of the crown in most European kingdoms because of the so-called "Salic law" officially adopted in France in the 13th century. It still applies to the Spanish monarchy, for instance. The name comes from the Sals, a tribe established in France before Charlemagne".

<http://www.goddesschess.com/chessays/calvotributepart3.html>, 2.12.2000

⁷² **CALVO, RICARDO** (1991) Birthplace of Modern Chess. New in Chess, Alkmaar (Holanda)

⁷³ The translation of the German text is from Jose Maria Gutierrez Dopino. The original text that I received at the beginning of 2003 is in an occasional bulletin (Okkasionalen Rundbrief of OGGK) of the Initiative Group Königstein. With respect to the birth of the new powerful dama in Valencia Meissenburg and Calvo Valencia wrote two articles together:

"He (Calvo) has demonstrated and warranted that modern chess can only come from Spain, with new figures of the dama and the bishop. At birth of chess [queen] France and Italy honored her. He found evidence in the history of the ancient printers and a certain Valencian circle of intellectuals. And this reason (one of many others) convinced me, though not, for example, the version that the modern chess dama is a strong female personality (Isabella the Catholic, as his friend Govert Westerveld, a historical draughts researcher, defends. "



Egbert Meisenburg
(Foto: Gentileza del Sr. Egbert Meisenburg)

Meanwhile in the year 2003 the historian Joseph A. Garzon had written a splendid book about the lost book of Francesch Vicent printed in Valencia in 1495, demonstrating with tremendous research that the book actually existed and that there must be an original book somewhere in the world. This does not surprise me at all, because

CALVO UND MEISENBURG "Valencia, Geburtstätte des modernen Schachs". Schach-Journal (1992), N° 3, pp. 34-46

CALVO UND E. MEISENBURG "Valencia und die Geburt des neuen Schachs". IFK (Internationales Forschungszentrum kulturwissenschaften). Wien. 1995, pp. 77-89

Spain has lost many jewels due to certain interests we never will understand. Therefore, seeing that Mr. Garzón knows the Valencian language because he is a native of Valencia and an expert in the history of chess, who better than he could check in 2003 in necessary depth the text of the poem *Scachs d'amor* taking as base⁷⁴ the influence of Queen Isabella of Castile?

Garzon had already devoted himself to love the poem *Scachs d'amor* in chapter of his book⁷⁵, and had helped Calvo with personal communications, i.e., Garzon was very familiar with this poem and he was the suitable person to bring many obscure points to light. So I talked at length with him on this issue, both of us agreeing on the fact that there were many things still unclear even today, but we have always taken as base that both the name of the piece (queen) and the new movement of the queen had to do with the influence of Queen Isabella and that there must be metaphors in the poem *Scachs d'amor* in this sense, because the poem is the original text of modern chess.

The great virtue of Garzón in research is his open mind and enormous analytical capacity⁷⁶ enabling him to research things to infinite depth. On the other hand his desire to join forces could never be without consequence and the result was that the sun was suddenly visible behind the clouds of centuries in the *Scachs d'amor* poem, a handwriting text full of metaphors. The chess historian José Antonio Garzón investigated, found hard evidence, and confirmed that the influence of the Catholic Queen Isabella, crowned Queen of Castile on 13 December 1474, was the true inspiration for this new kind of chess of the new powerful dama, both in creation of the name of the piece

⁷⁴ As base I refer to my book of 1997: “La influencia de la Reina Isabel la Católica sobre la Nueva Dama Poderosa en el Origen del Juego de las Damas y el Ajedrez Moderno” (The influence of Queen Isabella the Catholic on the New Powerful Dama in the Origin of the Draughts and Modern Chess Game).

⁷⁵ **GARZÓN ROGER, José Antonio** (2001) En Pos del incunable perdido. Francesch Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partits dels schachs, Valencia, 1495. Edited by the “Biblioteca Valenciana”. In chapter 4 entitled “Scachs d’amor, la otra gran aportación Valenciana” the poem is amply discussed.

⁷⁶ This is something that chess and draughts players have in common.

dama and in the creation of the new force of the queen. But it is important that we know more of this Valencian poem and nobody better than Garzón, evoking his cited book:

In 1905 the priest Ignasi Casanovas broke the news of his finding in the Royal Chapel of Palau in Barcelona of a manuscript whose collective authorship consists of three writers, all from Valencia and well known in the late fifteenth century: Francesc Castellvi, Narcís Vinyoles, and Bernat Fenollar. This unpublished poem by the end of that century carried the title of *Scachs d'amor* and was written in the Valencian language. José Paluzíe, then a remarkable bibliophile and key author in the early stages of the Spanish chess historiography, was the first to highlight the importance of the manuscript. However, even a man as rigorous, honest, and indefatigable researcher as he was could not take the necessary steps to escape the daily obligations. Probably the time in which he lived prevented it. Shortly thereafter, in 1914, the eminent bibliographer Ramon Miquel i Planas realized in *Bibliophilia*, a comprehensive analysis of the manuscript, translating it into Castilian⁷⁷.

The three authors of the poem of scachs d'amor have been studied in depth by Dr. Ricardo Calvo and we extract from Ricardo Calvo's⁷⁸ work only the references to the connection that the poets had with king Ferdinand the Catholic.

1. Mossen (Sir) Bernat Fenollar (Penàguila, ca. 1438 – Valencia, 1516)

Priest and Gentleman. He belonged to an illustrious family and he was benefited in addition to the subreceiver's charge of the city, since this consists in 1503 and in 1510, and that one of the position of mathematics professor of the University of Valencia. He was a friend of the famous Ausias March. Very important as literary figure turns out turns out to be Sir Bernat Fenollar, born in Penàguila, next to Alcoy, in the province of Alicante. He managed to recover other

⁷⁷ **GARZÓN, JOSÉ A.** (2001) En Pos del incunable perdido. Francesch Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partits dels schachs, Valencia, 1495. Editado por la Biblioteca Valenciana. pp. 147-148

⁷⁸ **CALVO, RICARDO** (1999). El Poema scachs d'amor (siglo XV). Primer texto conservado sobre ajedrez moderno. Análisis y comentarios por Ricardo Calvo. Editorial Jaque XXI, S.L. – Madrid, with a prologue of José Antonio Garzón Roger.

business, as that of notary of ration (what supposes a sure relationship with his companion Luis de Santángel) and chaplain and professor of the chapel of king **Ferdinand the Catholic** in 1479. The title of mossen (Sir) was proper to the priests, but not with exclusivity. Also it was shown by Vinyoles, a lay politician and married man, and also the same title is assigned to Castellví or to own Luis de Santángel. The importance of Fenollar takes root in his activities as organizer of literary contests. He was the soul of the whole group and not uselessly he appears in the manuscript recovering the role of Mercury, the umpire. The gatherings were celebrated in his house and his most intimate collaborators seem to have been Castellví and Vinyoles.

2. Mossen (Sir) Narcís Vinyoles (Valencia, ca. 1440 – ca. 1516)

Doctor of laws. He exercised the legal profession during a time, and was entrusted of the criminal justice of his city. He was a skillful man in the Latin and Italian languages and most applied to the history and lemosin poetry. The biography of Narcís Vinyoles overlaps chronologically with enough accuracy the biography of his sovereign and protector, King **Ferdinand the Catholic**. In two occasions, along his extensive political life of more than 48 years, Vinyoles occupied

the important charge of Civil Justice, the supreme judge for this type of suits. And in 1495, a letter of king Fernando who refers to Vinyoles in the most burning terms of praise, proposes him as Criminal Justice.

A proof of the level of civil prestige is the fact that Vinyoles was occupying besides for several years the charge of principal manager of the Llotja or New Market (1473, 1496, 1497 and 1516), which supposes a great political achievement in a city as mercantile as Valencia was in those days.



Mossen Narcís Vinyoles

Part of the political success of Vinyoles is explained, since it has been mentioned, for his narrow relation with a powerful group of converted jews: the clan Santángel. Luis de Santángel was the most powerful banker of the kingdom of Aragon, and king Ferdinand was frequently depending not only on his money but also on his advice. It was Luis de Santángel who financed the first expedition of Cristobal Columbus.

3. Francí de Castellví (Valencia, ca. 1440 - 6.11.1508)

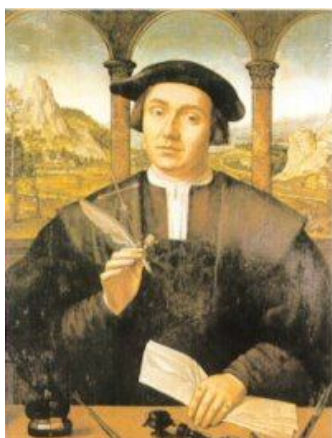
Francisco de Castellví was a prestigious courtier of his time in the Crown of Aragon, Lord of several towns near to Játiva, and the first chamberlain, and later butler, of king Ferdinand the Catholic. He undoubtedly belonged to an aristocratic Valencian family. He is always called Don or Mossen. The family Castellví became related by marriage with the Jewish clan of the Santángel.

The *Obres e Trobes* (the first book printed in Spain in 1474 in Valencia) is an art competition held on March 25 of that year. There are many poets who have poems and couplets in this art competition, and we find our three earlier mentioned poets among them⁷⁹. The *Obres e Trobes* is considered to be the first literary work printed in Spain of which the only known copy in the world is preserved in the University Library of Valencia. It consists of 60 leaves without foliation and signature and is written in Roman letters on paper with hand and star watermark. The three poets, as we see, already knew each other. Seeing the relationship they had with King Ferdinand and knowing his passion for the game of chess, there may be another thing they thought about around 1475. It was time to change the figure of the queen on the chessboard and inform the King by means of their poem in the form of a manuscript. Finally in 1475 Isabella of Castile was queen with more power than her husband and she let this fact be known to the whole world. Anyway apart from this event, she by no means ceased to respect her husband at all times. Some months earlier, on October 4 1474, her implacable enemy, the Marquis of Villena died. Then King Henry was soon forsaken and friendless, quickly

⁷⁹ **PASTOR FUSTER, Justo** (1827) Biblioteca Valenciana,. Servicio de reproducción de libros, Librerías "Paris-Valencia", 1980. P. 52

became sick, and died on December 12 1474. The next day Isabella was crowned Queen of Castile.

It was a political decision of *fait accompli* that would provoke the war between Isabella and her supporters against her opponents. Isabella emerged victorious in the struggle for the throne and later during the field battle. She won people for her cause not only for her modern war machine, but also for her great propaganda machine as a tool of war⁸⁰. The Queen was then twenty-three years old, had a beautiful and majestic figure, and was dressed in white brocade and ermine from head to toe.



Luis Santángel

When Ferdinand learned by a letter of Carrillo about the coronation of his wife, he was angry because the sword of justice had been brought before the Queen⁸¹. It was not customary in Aragon or Castile to carry

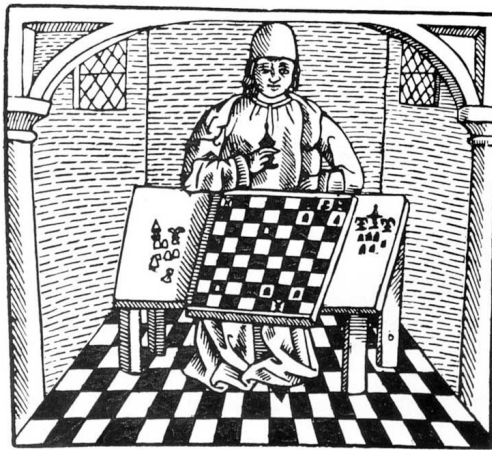
⁸⁰ **AZCONA, Tarsicio** (1964) *Isabel la Católica. Estudio crítico de su vida y su reinado*, Madrid, p. 153

⁸¹ **VAL VALDIVIESO, María Isabel del** (1991) *La sucesión de Enrique IV*. In: *Espacio, tiempo y Forma. Historia Medieval*, p. 50. She states:

A few days before the feast of Corpus Christi held that year on June 13 the rebels organized the spectacular deposition of Henry IV on June 5, 1465. The montage, apart from being colorful, had great political effect from the point of propagandistic view: On a stage prepared for this purpose the rebels proceeded to divest the real

the sword before the queens. In Aragon the *Salic Law* was also in effect which excluded women from the throne. Fernando evidently thought, despite the marriage convention terms with Isabella, that he would be the king of Castile after the death of King Henry IV⁸².

Calvo thought the poem had been written in the period between 1470 and 1790. On the contrary, Garzon wanted to lean more toward the year 1474, because the jump of the King was at a much earlier stage closer to Lucena and due to the explicit and novel references.



Book of Caxton, 1474-1475

attributes of a doll representing the King who was finally driven from the throne, falling to the ground. Then these attributes of power were given to Alfonso who was proclaimed king. His supporters call him Alfonso XII. The responsible persons of this act knew perfectly what they were doing. The use of a doll dressed in the attributes of royalty clearly represented the king, and to popular opinion it was the King without any doubt. This was a message that the Spaniards of that time could easily grasp. But in the "Farce of Avila" there are still other elements (cleverly highlighted by Professor Mackay) explaining their political efficacy and immediate popular success: with the help of an effigy of the king the rebels were removing his attributes of royalty one by one, and these were subsequently handed over to Alfonso who in turn would receive the crown, sword, scepter, and throne to be finally hailed as king.

⁸² WALSH, W.T. (1963) Isabel la cruzada. Colección Austral, Espasa Calpe, S.A., pp. 44-46

Beside that it was also the year of the Marian contest. However, Isabella was not queen until the end of 1474. On the other hand, we cannot forget that the book of Caxton⁸³ was printed in 1474-1475, so I discarded the period 1470-1474. Consequently it was necessary to look for evidence in the poem. I started from the idea that in the poem should be metaphors that can determine a date and I was right. The result was that the poem *Scachs d'amor* was written by the poets⁸⁴ after 1474, because as we have seen, precisely on December 13 Isabella was crowned queen in the Alcazar of Segovia. Moreover, the sword of justice had been taken before the queen. The Poets say it clearly in their verse 54:

But our game still wants to adorn itself with a new and surprising style for mainly the Queen's dignity is enhanced as she is given the sword, the scepter, and the throne, because, before all, the Queen requests her honour. She is worthier and the most achieving one. She strolls with ease through the entire field without straying for fear or anger. The greater her freedom, the more she should fear being made captive".

Something unusual in the life of a woman in the fifteenth century, but the poem says it clearly and there is no error: *the Queen's dignity is enhanced as she is given the sword, the scepter, and the throne*, and this was precisely the major finding of Garzon which I meant when I spoke with him, telling him there should be metaphors in the poem in relation to the queen. Garzon with his nose for discovery did not make any mistake and found various proofs, so his important findings

⁸³ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno, p. 218. In the paragraph on the origin of large (powerful) Dama in the chess and draughts game I stated that "The figures in the chess game are the same ones as in Cessolis based on real life" or as Garzon better says, "a mirror of life." The famous English printer William Caxton printed a second book in Bruges in 1474, others say 1475. It was "The game and playe of chesse," from the book of Ludo Scacchorum of Jacobus de Cessolis through the Frenchman Vignay French Jehan, completed in 1474.

⁸⁴ Most likely the poets could get a copy of Caxton's book as Bruges had active trade relations with Valencia for export of cloth and import of citrus fruits. Even Spanish colonies had established themselves there.

deserve a separate chapter. As in real life, the queen's husband Fernando had less power than his wife, so it was appropriate to investigate whether the poem also said something to this effect on the King. I was lucky with verse 54:

Therefore, since it is said that she is the most worthy and the most achieving one, she may stroll with ease through the entire field.

This is something that I already had expressed years ago⁸⁵. On the other hand Queen Isabella was in all parts of her territory. So that was another important point to verify in the poem. I was lucky⁸⁶ with stanza 28:

“The great Queen, proclaiming the beautiful name of Love, command to come to that part, crossing plains and mountains on a horseback for conquering and gathering her troops”.

In my book of 1997 I wrote something similar⁸⁷:

"The support of the church seemed decisively to defeat Alfonso V. Isabella was actively involved in the recruitment of soldiers and rode long distances on horseback for preparing the final battle".

⁸⁵ WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno, p. 30. Translation of the Dutch page:

Queen Isabella, unlike what happened in other countries, had more power in the Kingdom of Castile than her husband Fernando. By marrying Fernando had to sign an agreement that accepted the laws and customs of Castile. To that end he had to be established in Castile, of which the kingdom he could only leave with his wife, the Queen's approval. Appointments and designations also required his wife's approval. (WALSH, W.T. (1963) Isabel la cruzada. Colección Austral, Espasa Calpe, S.A.)

⁸⁶ Garzón discovered metaphors in stanzas 1, 54, 57, 60, and 63. Thereafter he sent me the Spanish translations by Ramón Miquel i Planas (1874-1950) in 1914.

⁸⁷ WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno, p. 32. Cf. (WALSH, W.T. (1963) Isabel la cruzada. Colección Austral, Espasa Calpe, S.A.)

"All ride, ride well, Isabella and Fernando alike." ("Tanto monta, monta tanto, Isabel como Fernando"). On 15 January 1475 Isabella and Fernando signed the agreement of Segovia in which the divisions of powers between the two monarchs is clearly stipulated⁸⁸. Isabella is now "Queen of Castile" and her husband received the title of King. Ferdinand of Aragon, who was elected by the heart of Isabella, but with whom she did not share the throne, was relegated to the role of King Consort. However, Isabella was smart enough to sit him beside her and to let him know with firm smoothness who had the power and who decided. In this competition she was taking all imaginable precautions to prevent the absorption of power by the Aragonese⁸⁹, seeing that the marriage at this time had only one daughter.



Queen Isabella I of Castile

⁸⁸ For more data about this important agreement one can consult: **SUÁREZ FERNÁNDEZ, Luis** (1989) *Los Reyes Católicos. La conquista del Trono*, Madrid, pp. 75-94 and **AZCONA, Tarsicio de** (1986) *Isabel la Católica*, Madrid, pp. 197-203. The text of this agreement (*Concordia de Segovia*) is in: AGS, Patronato Real, leg. 12, and also in: **DORMER, Diego José** (1683) *Discursos varios de Historia, con muchas escrituras reales antiguas y notas de algunas de ellas*, Zaragoza, pp. 295-302

⁸⁹ **TORRE, ANTONIO DE LA** (1955) *Vida y obra de Fernando el Católico*. Cited by Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *Historia de España*, tomo XVII. *La España de los Reyes Católicos*, p. 13

As from that moment the two husbands would form a block that was impossible to divide. Fernando inherited the throne of Aragon four years later after the death of his father so that Castile and Aragon joined in 1479 and formed the basis of the total reunification⁹⁰ of Spain becoming a unified kingdom both politically and religiously and many achievements were obtained by this marriage since they came to power. But let us return to 1475. In May of that year, only 5 months after the accession to the throne, Isabella learned that Alfonso V had crossed the Portuguese border with a troop of 20,000 soldiers and marched towards Palencia. He had civilly married his niece, the Spanish Joanna la Beltraneja and thought he had the right to erect as king of the Kingdom of Castile and Leon.

Joanna was the daughter of the Castilian king Henry IV and Joanna of Portugal, his second wife. The Courts of Toledo had proclaimed her to the throne. However, during a noble uprising two years later without strong evidence people accused her mother of adultery and that Joanna in fact was the daughter of the Queen's favorite, Beltran de la Cueva, the 1st Duke of Albuquerque (which explains the nickname Beltraneja). In 1468 there came an end to the revolt by means of the Guisando Pact by which Henry IV was recognized as successor to his sister Isabel (later Queen Isabella). But two years later (Val de Lozoya) a confrontation between the siblings (Isabella married Ferdinand) was the cause that King Henry IV would again recognize the rights to the throne of Joanna.

Then Queen Isabella gave Ferdinand complete absolute power (equal to equal), invalidating almost all distinctions of the earlier declaration except the point that gave full possession of the Crown to the

⁹⁰ King Ferdinand issued a document on April 14 1481 by which Isabella got the Crown of Aragon in the same way of powers that King Ferdinand had. See **TORRE, Antonio de la**: "*Isabel la Católica corregente de la Corona de Aragón*", In: *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, 1953, pp. 423-428.

women⁹¹. Fernando gave great importance to this document, sending a copy of it to his father on 11 May 1475. In fact, and from this moment, Fernando accessed the full real power of Castile⁹².



The Bishop Alonso Carrillo

The matter was not clear at all and disturbing. Isabella had lost her old friend Archbishop Carrillo who had deserted her and was now with the enemies. People in Castile said: "He who has his hand to the Archbishop will win." Carrillo for his part said: "I removed her from the spinning wheel and gave her a scepter, now I will take away the scepter and bring her to the spinning wheel again". The poets of *Scachs d'amor* were without a doubt aware of the Archbishop

⁹¹ **DORMER, DIEGO JOSÉ** (1683) *Discursos varios de Historia*, Zaragoza, pp. 302-305. Cited by por Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *Historia de España*, tomo XVII. *La España de los Reyes Católicos*, p. 13

⁹² Presumably the poets of the poem *Scachs d'amor* were aware of the text of this power when they wrote stanza 60, where the queen and king equal each other.

Carrillo's movements who years ago was very much in favour of Isabella and suddenly took a position against Isabella, helping Alfonso V and Joanna la Beltraneja. So the poets in verse 9 warn the Queen, *"And so Will, lady of high dowries, must take great care with whom she goes into battle. And remaining the lowest being more important, she should retire for rebuilding the game;"*

We can understand from the text that the poets considered Queen Isabella to be a woman of high dowries. The first time that the dama was discussed in the poem is in stanza 5 where the term "gentle lady" (dama gentil) is used, which poets often used in those years. The marquis of Santillana, Juan de Mena, and others used the term of "gracious lady" (gentil dama). The poets of *Scachs d'amor* speak in their verses about love, fire of love, lover, etc. and the supremacy of the lady (lady of such high dowries) is one of the characteristic features of this love. Queen Isabella was the idealization of women towards lady (Dama) for the poets.



Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon

With all this we mean to say that the term "dama" here has nothing to do in this case with the term "guy de dames" of France that was found in an XIII century French manuscript and was also found in the manuscript *Civis Bononiae* of the XV century. We mention this because Dutch historians purport that the word "dama" – referring to the game of chess and draughts - is etymologically of French origin and therefore the game of draughts is a French invention. I disagree completely with this view. I have always said that the word "dama" as

known in Spanish chess and draughts game has developed independently in Spanish, thus regardless of France.

In other words the origin of the term "dama" is French and no one doubts this, because we know that this word was also used in French Chess manuscripts from many centuries ago. However, the existence of the word "dama" in chess in Spain, in the sense of new powerful piece, was not borrowed from France, but had to do with the idealization of women to Lady and Queen Isabella was an example of such idealization. Before the appearance of the manuscript *Scachs d'amor* the word "dama" was not used in Spain. Precisely the three poets introduced the term "dama" to the chess game in Spain due to the new power of the piece and never due to a French chess manuscript. With the poem *Scachs d'amor* we finally have the proof for that in this sense.

Returning to the 20,000 Portuguese soldiers who marched in the direction of Palencia, Isabella logically defended her legal rights and quickly gathered thousands of soldiers in Toledo and took the lead with armor in the style of the French Joan of Arc. Isabella was lucky to be there with Cardinal Pedro González de Mendoza, a very skilled man in those days. He was a son of the famous poet and military, the Marquis of Santillana. The Cardinal, like his father, was well educated, a charismatic personality, an experienced soldier, and a witty and impenetrable politician. In the first phase of the war Alfonso V had won a clear victory. The Portuguese monarch had settled firmly on a territory so vast that his stay in Castile was ensured during the winter of 1476. The poets knew that the "Agreement of Segovia" discussed the Succession to the Crown and they were aware of the role to be played by Aragon in the future government.

This matter requires clarification, as the father of King Ferdinand King John II of Aragon did not see the issue of succession in case of death of the Castilian Queen Isabella. In April 1476 the Castilian Court swore in Madrigal as heir to Princess Isabella, of which the conditions of text did not have the approval of King John II, because the position

of King Ferdinand was not clear in case of Queen Isabella's death⁹³. This topic recurred during Isabella's entire reign. It is logical to presume that King John II was well informed about the oath and it is clear that the poets were also aware of this whole matter.

This is better understandable if we clarify what happened with the birth of the desired boy on June 20 1478. Then, especially in Aragon, jubilation was everywhere. Moreover, the councilors of the city of Barcelona wrote a letter to Don Fernando congratulating him and predicted that the new baby was the unification "united dels e Senyoria regne." This shows that there was not only a Unionist circle in the Court of Castile or around Ferdinand, but that this idea had also spread through large segments of the bourgeoisie of the Crown of Aragón⁹⁴, among which were our three poets.

However, Ferdinand and Isabella's army had to be organized well due to the Portuguese king's hesitant behavior. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Castile succeeded in reducing the Portuguese army in Toro⁹⁵ on March 1 1476. The battle of Toro was not just a military

⁹³ **FRANCISCO OLMOS, José María de** (1995) Juan II de Aragón y el nacimiento del Príncipe Juan. Consejos políticos a Fernando el Católico. In: *En la España Medieval*, Nº 18, Madrid, 1995, pp. 241-251

FRANCISCO OLOS, José María de (2002) La sucesión de los Reyes Católicos (1475-1504). Texts and documents. In: Cuadernos de Investigación Histórica. Seminario "Cisneros", 2002, 19, 19, pp. 133-134

⁹⁴ **FRANCISCO OLMOS, José María de** (1996) La última intromisión de Juan II en la Política castellana. In: las Actas del XV Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón. El Poder Real en la Corona de Aragón (siglos XIV-XVI), Part I, volumen 2 (Crónica y ponencias), Zaragoza, 1996, pp. 459-474. (King John II was always attentive to the problems of the government of Castile and the position of his son, and as we can see from his coded letters between July and August 1478, a few months before his death he still gave his son tips on how to defend his place in this kingdom, and even how to manage the newborn Prince John's education)

⁹⁵ The testament of King Ferdinand made in Torredesillas, 12-VII-1475 was Published by the **DUQUE DE BERWICK Y ALBA** (1915). Noticias históricas y genealógicas sobre los estados de Montijo y Teba, Madrid, pp. 232-235; and **SESMA MUÑOS, J.A.** (1992). Fernando de Aragón, Hispaniarum Rex, Zaragoza, Apéndice de documentos notables, nº 13, pp. 260-263. Cited by **FRANCISCO OLMOS, José María de** (2002) La sucesión de los Reyes Católicos (1475-1504).

victory, but more a political victory, because it resolved the civil war in favor of the Catholic Monarchs. And we think that the date of *Scachs d'amor* can be verified by this matter in 1476, because in the poem we see a winner⁹⁶.



Book of Hernando del Pulgar

The queen loved her husband passionately. She was superior to him in talent and gifts of government, but she acted in such a way that "the merits were attributed to him." She was almost fanatical about the religious aspect. Apart from that she was impulsive, energetic, proud, and above all visionary. She was jealous to excess, but covered her husband's infidelities. Isabella's character was very strong. Once she was annoyed with the work developed by the chronicler of the Court, Hernando del Pulgar. When writing a feat of Ferdinand the chronicler made no mention of her as a partner in this feat and Isabella reprimanded Pulgar. The chronicler of the Court could not do anything

Texts and documents. In: Cuadernos de Investigación Histórica. Seminario "Cisernos", 2002, 19, 19, pp. 129-166

⁹⁶ Chess historian Von der Lasa gave the date 1475, Garzón proposed me 1475. I thought that the poem was started in 1475 and completed in 1476. Today Garzón and other historians have generally accepted the date of 1475 to which I agree completely in order to have one date.

else than rectify the incident, because above all Isabella was a very powerful queen.

Isabella, the humanist queen, exempted printers and booksellers from paying tax since 1477, confirming this exemption in the Courts of Toledo in 1480. This is the reason why the press flourished more in Spain than anywhere else in Europe. With the help of the humanist queen the amount of books was enormous. It motivated printers so that many works were printed to the cult of Queen of Castile. According to the queen's chronicler, the Italian Lucio Marineo Siculo, this was the reason that the Castilian geniuses were successful in literature. Due to this event the culture in Castile had an advantage for several decades in northern Europe, a culture that countries like England, France, or the German States could not reach. This was the case, perhaps, only by some Italian states⁹⁷.



Ferdinand I of Aragon

Isabella hated the cards and all chance games⁹⁸, and like the scholar Lucio Marineo who lived in her Court for some years she regarded

⁹⁷ This is something to bear in mind with respect to the first books of chess and draughts. This culture was initiated by Queen Isabella, thus giving rise to the magnificence of the fifteenth century - the Spanish XVI century stunned the world.

⁹⁸ It is quite interesting to know what games were played in the XV century. Under the provisions of the Court of Toledo it was only allowed to play cards and tables since the ban was total for the game of dice. The crier of Murcia, just as in other

professional players to have the same condition as blasphemous ones. The Courts ordinances of Madrigal, held in 1476, are a clear example that Isabella did not want to have any of the games and that she wanted to remove them wherever possible. The legal framework to pursue or chase the game was ready and now she could fight the vice that caused the ruin of many families and estates, fights, riots, injuries, deaths, and above all offenses against God. Because of the dice game people spitting and expressing filthy words, blasphemed and renounced God.

The provisions arising from the decision of the Courts of Toledo, so hard to be implemented throughout the kingdom, greatly punished the game players due to the hardness of the same and the zeal of the councils to meet the Royal Ordinances⁹⁹. Therefore it was an ideal situation to create other types of not prohibited games, such as chess and other types of Andarraya and to promote new rules in the same games or invent other ones.

It must have been a tough test for Isabella when she became aware of the fact that Fernando was fond of cards. The chronicler Hernando de Pulgar tells us that the king lost much time with the game of chess, sometimes more than his work really could permit. In his youth he also played the ball game, but in later years Ferdinand was fond of chess

cities, was saying "... you cannot play dice and *jaldeta* or backgammon, or cards, or *a la rifa*, or the *flux*, or some other games, nor play them in your homes or give players boards or cards for playing".

Municipal Archives of Murcia A.C. 1475-76, session of 8-XII-1475.

Cited by **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de Asís** (1998) In: Actualización científica y didáctica en historia medieval. Capítulo El Juego en la edad media, notas para su estudio, p. 218

In Murcia in the fifteenth century people played "*gresca* or *grisca*, *rifa*, *jaldeta*, *bufa*, *avellanetas*, *alcarriches*, both *dardo* and *alfardón*, and other games known as *flux*, Cf. **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de Asís** (1990) In: Documents of the fourteenth century, 3, C.O.D.O.M., XII. Murcia, p. 351

⁹⁹ **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de Asís** (1998) Actualización científica y didáctica en historia medieval. Capítulo El Juego en la edad media, notas para su estudio, pp. 210-211

and *chaquete*¹⁰⁰. His wife, however, preferred poetry, music, horse riding, hunting, and holding serious discussions on literature, philosophy, and theology¹⁰¹.

As became clear in this chapter, King Fernando had a considerable interaction with the three poets and presumably they wanted to flatter him in one way or another and had presented him with the poem. The strange thing is that the poem by these three poets would not be published when they were in the habit of publishing all their poems.

This event is rather surprising, because the two monarchs were able to take full advantage of poetic propaganda in those years. In those years the poetic eulogy of symbols and images formed a royal image without contradiction, being a stereotype of the king easily assimilated by the receiver and making it one of the privileged discourses of monarchy. The size of these panegyrics propaganda is based on the intrinsic to the entire oral poetic composition intended to be recited or sung. Poetry allows optimal conditions for the dissemination of political ideas, as it is not only intended for a small audience, but it also manages to reach a wide audience in the context of religious and courtesans' celebrations, and especially the citizens' celebrations, because they summon all the people around the monarch. Hence the Royal ceremonies are the ideal projection of royal propaganda which is contained in the written poetic compositions to exalt the monarchy, the figure and actions of the monarchs¹⁰².

¹⁰⁰ It was a game of backgammon. Each player had 15 pieces. It is a game that has been taken erroneously more than once for a game of draughts.

¹⁰¹ WALSH, W.T. (1963) *Isabel la cruzada*. Colección Austral, Espasa Calpe, S.A., p. 36

¹⁰² CARRASCO MANCHADO, ANA ISABEL (1995) Propaganda política en los panegíricos poéticos de los Reyes Católicos: una aproximación. En: *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, Volume II, pp. 517-543. The main formulas and expressions from which the defense of the monarchy had been realized in the songbooks have been studied by: NIETO SORIA, José Manuel (1988) *Apología y propaganda de la realeza en los cancioneros castellanos del siglo XV*. pp. 200-221. You can see his work: NIETO SORIA, José Manuel (1988) *Fundamentos ideológicos del poder real en Castilla (siglos XIII-SVI)*, Madrid. On the other hand the relationship between propaganda and royal ceremonies is studied in the work of: NIETO

Poems dedicated to the kings, which would be recited during the royal entrance, help to complete the character of propaganda that this type of ceremony has. The poet becomes the authoritative voice of the speech recognition that the king asks his people. But the poem also proves to be the ideal way to transmit other political objects, such as the derivatives of the domination pretensions of the king. All this is reflected in the composition directed to Fernando on his entry in Barcelona in 1473.



The Catholic Monarchs

It is a composition of one of his most faithful followers, Gómez Manrique, and expresses the general mood with Fernando's pace in a so difficult situation. Fernando arrived at Barcelona just out of the revolt and this is why in the poem of welcoming people tried to please the future King of Aragon with expressions of love and fidelity. Then the monarchy order of apology is reflected, which is nothing else than the religious model of monarchy, in which the king keeps peace in the kingdom by keeping the laws and dispensing justice, in contrast to the

SORIA, José Manuel (1993) *Ceremonias de la realeza. Propaganda y legitimación en la Castilla Trastámara*, Madrid.

divided Kingdom: "Loving Justice, King justified King, / shall be prospered your crown / ...with weapons in war,/ A God in heaven, a king on earth / to be feared by all nations."

Although organized by city authorities, the Royal entrances cannot escape the king's control, who is the true protagonist. For this reason expressions do not fail that besides exalting and affirming the monarchical power drive a given expansion program.

This poem employs the use of prophecy that serves to encourage Fernando's expansionist ambitions on the Peninsula. Another way to achieve the same goal is to greet Fernando with appellatives which will encourage him to reach the highest power. "That King from whom the world expect Monarch", which is the same as saying "universal emperor". These expressions are not random if we consider the historical context in which they are pronounced: the imposition of royal authority on a rebellious city, i.e. the state of an imminent struggle against the French rival and the dispute over the Castilian throne¹⁰³. In the poem de Gracia Dei, that apparently dates before the year 1468, the figure of Isabella is symbolically elevated to a position of magnificence and triumph. The whole Court of Isabella accompanies the infant with a colorful parade, being an imitation of royal entrance into a city or simply a festive entrance to the palace. Allegorical characters embody the virtues around Isabella and, personified, recite verses exalting her preeminence and victory¹⁰⁴.

The war of succession to the throne is the context in which they wrote and released the Sermon of ballads *about the high and mighty prince, king and lord, King Ferdinand, King of Castile and Aragon, on the yoke ...*, written by the preacher of the kings Iñigo de Mendoza.

¹⁰³ **CARRASCO MANCHADO, Ana Isabel** (1995) Propaganda política en los panegíricos poéticos de los Reyes Católicos: una aproximación. In: Anuario de Estudios Medievales, Volume II, pp. 521-523

¹⁰⁴ For the work *Crianza y virtuosa doctrina* of Pedro de Gracia Dei. Vid, **INFANTES, Victor** (1989) Edición, literatura y realza, apuntes sobre los pliegos poéticos incunables. In: "Literatura Hispánica, Reyes Católicos y Descubrimiento", Barcelona, pp. 95-97

According to Julio Rodríguez-Puértolas¹⁰⁵ these ballads are dated 1475-1476. This is a poem made in the sense that Ferdinand wanted to put on an image of authority, because the idea was to win the war and subjugate the nobles who had declared to be his enemies. On the other hand the king also needed to convey a most benevolent image of him to allay fears that could encourage, and inspire greater confidence in the Castilian kingdom, highlighting their good qualities above those of the Portuguese opponent.



King Ferdinand II of Aragon

Throughout the sermon the legitimacy of the succession of Ferdinand is emphasized: "Our natural Lord / Who by law and reason / is dressing State cloths / of Castile and Leon /. Another very effective way to do it (remember this liturgical context of diffusion) is alluding to the divine origin of power granted to the king, God puts in Fernando's hands currency or insignia of power (thongs and yoke) with which to subjugate the nobility.

It also affirms the legitimacy of succession of the kings by alluding to recent events, as is the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella. It tries to

¹⁰⁵ **MENDOZA, Fray Iñigo de** (1968) *Cancionero*, Madrid, p. LXVI. Cited by **CARRASCO MANCHADO, Ana Isabel** (1995). *Propaganda política en los panegíricos poéticos de los Reyes Católicos: una aproximación*. En: *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, Volume II, p. 526

discredit the arguments used by the propaganda of the other side. Irrefutable proof of legitimacy will be God's judgment favorable to the kings, which will give final victory to Fernando. Furthermore war propaganda feeds on anti-French and anti-Portuguese references and a critique to the cooperation with those nobles who are at odds with the kings¹⁰⁶.

Most likely the king himself had to do with this matter. King Ferdinand knew that his wife did not quite agree with the hours he lost playing chess. The queen did not like games in those years¹⁰⁷. On the other hand there is the possibility that the king felt himself somewhat humbled by this poem where the queen had more power than the king. As we have seen previously political poems were written for Ferdinand and the poem *Scachs d'amor* would focus all attention on his wife. However, it is reasonable to think that Ferdinand discussed the issue with his wife.

Whatever the real reasons would be for not publishing the poem we will never know. All Isabella's ideas to unify Spain and the formation of only one religion were realized in 1492 and from this date she¹⁰⁸ supposedly gave the green light to the final implementation of the new powerful dama in the game of chess¹⁰⁹ and andarraya. Antonio Nebrija

¹⁰⁶ **CARRASCO MANCHADO, ANA ISABEL** (1995) Propaganda política en los panegíricos poéticos de los Reyes Católicos: una aproximación. En: Anuario de Estudios Medievales, Volume II, pp. 527-528

¹⁰⁷ 1480-VI-13, Toledo. Reyes al concejo de Sevilla. Ratificando los ordenamientos promulgados hasta la fecha referentes a la prohibición de juegos de dados y cartas. (The Monarchs to the council of Seville, ratifying the enacted orders to that date with reference to the prohibition of dice and cards games). (Archivo General de Simancas, R.G.S. 1480-VI-13, fol. 263). Cited by **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de Asís** (1998) Actualización científica y didáctica en historia medieval. Capítulo El Juego en la edad media, notas para su estudio, pp. 220-221

¹⁰⁸ We know that the queen was vain and liked the honors and fame.

¹⁰⁹ We do not know if they played chess with the powerful dama, but the fact is that even with chess people played for money. Francisco Moro, neighbour of Logroño and squire of the guards of captain Puertocarrero, was able to win 20,000 maravedies from Juan Gonzalez playing chess. Cited by **VEAS ARTESEROS, Francisco de**

was responsible for spreading the words “Dama” and “Andarraya” around the world through his dictionaries around the world. The time had come to show the world what the Spanish nation was made of.



The chess game was always present in the Court

By chance I found out that approval of the voyage of Columbus in 1492 had to do with a game of chess. The matter seems doubtful to me, but it is worthwhile to mention, because I have always related the details of the discovery (1492) with the accolade of modern chess (a new world and life was found on the board). The author of the article appoints up to two times Nebrija, who in my opinion was well aware (much more than it seems) of all matters relating to the new powerful dama. Garzón was saying the same: *"I think it a very valid article for our research. From it we can also deduce that the Queen was not exactly a bad player (including modern chess), but the issue of the chess party is more questionable and looks like a composition."*

Asís (1998) Actualización científica y didáctica en historia medieval. Capítulo El Juego en la edad media, notas para su estudio, p. 207

In this respect the writer Ned Munger refers to Edward Lasker who had supposedly investigated an archive of Cordoba where he found two letters. These letters were supposedly written in 1492 by Hernando del Pulgar who describes a chess incident between King Ferdinand and his Minister Fonseca¹¹⁰.

History often hangs on strange and unrelated events. Indeed, had a game of chess in 1492 turned out differently, the Western Hemisphere might have been discovered by someone other than Columbus, and South America might have been conquered by a people other than the Spanish. It seems that because the explorer was infuriated by King Ferdinand's unwillingness to assign him the rank of admiral, he was about to leave Spain and forgo his expedition for the Spanish court. As it happened, that news reached the palace while Ferdinand was playing chess with a favorite opponent Señor Fonseca. Much as Queen Isabella wanted to intercede on Columbus's behalf, she knew better than to interrupt the play. Hernando del Pulgar who was watching the game agreed with her and believed that Ferdinand's reaction to the news about Columbus would be influenced by his mood at

¹¹⁰ **MUNGER, Ned** (1998) *Culture, chess, & art. A collector's odyssey across seven continents: the Americas*, p. 167. He stated:

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Pulgar whispered a move to Isabella. She distracted Ferdinand just as he raised his hand to make a fatal move. He rethought his strategy, made a different move, and won the match. Isabella then easily persuaded him to send a horseman to find and recall Columbus.

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On the other side Julio Ganzo¹¹¹ talks about the same subject related to chess letters in his book¹¹² which is recommended for chess researchers to study in depth. In the latter case the author is M.J. Vavallée who apparently published the same cards in the French magazine *La Palamède* in 1845. Hence we see a connection between Edward Lasker and Vavallée. Vavallée's article was translated into Spanish by Dr. José Tolosa y Carreras in 1898. I will begin this translation as it appears in the magazine *Ruy López*¹¹³:

¹¹¹ **GANZO, JULIO** (1966) *Historia General del Ajedrez*, Madrid.

¹¹² Garzón informed me that the article in question was published in French in *La Palamède*, 1845 (pp. 459-464). It was translated by the eminent Dr. José Tolosa y Carreras (who perfectly mastered French) in the *Ruy López Magazine*, Volume III, March 1898 (p. 66 to 69). The translation that Ganzo incorporated in his book is identical to the one made by Tolosa y Carreras, but, incomprehensibly, it wasn't quoted. One of these epistle was copied from the file by M.J. Vavallée (others say M.J. Lavalée) and published in magazine *La Palamède*.

¹¹³ **TOLOSA Y CARRERAS, JOSÉ** (1898) *Ruy López Magazine*, Volume III, March 1898, pp. 66 to 69). I thank Mr. Garzón for giving me the text. Garzón says that coming from Tolosa y Carreras we can trust him with complete assurance of their fidelity to the article from 1845. Regarding this first article the author seems well documented and one could say that he has consulted the files of letters. How difficult and arduous is the research! Someone will have to see the letters one day in Colombina to confirm the veracity and authenticity of this story ... and maybe find something new and surprising.

Una partida de ajedrez jugada en 1492 (Article title)

Hernando de Pulgar in his admirable chronicle about the Catholic Kings states that Ferdinand V was very fond of chess, but that the renowned writer whom some people call the Spanish Plutarch, limits his chronicle to the mere indication of the fact, and nothing else we would know regarding that not existing such collection of letters due to the aforesaid author, some were published and others remain unpublished. Would the latter ones really be authentic? I ignore it, because some people confuse such chronicler with another Hernando del Pulgar, Salar Mayor which immortalized his name doing famous heroic acts in Granada war. Hence to distinguish the historian and the warrior one would refer to him as the one of the Accomplishments¹¹⁴. Which of the Hernandos would be the father of the unpublished manuscripts? Did they come from other contemporary authors of both Pulgares, such as Anglería (Pedro Mártir) or Bernáldez¹¹⁵? Nothing can be assured in a categorical way, but if I am to judge by the color and type of paper used in the aforementioned letters, I can say that those were written in the late fifteenth century. There goes one of these epistles, which I copy from the file and submit to the readers' intelligent appreciation.

We now continue with the text as contained in Julio Ganzo's book, of which the translation is exactly like Dr. José Tolosa y Carrera's from 1898:

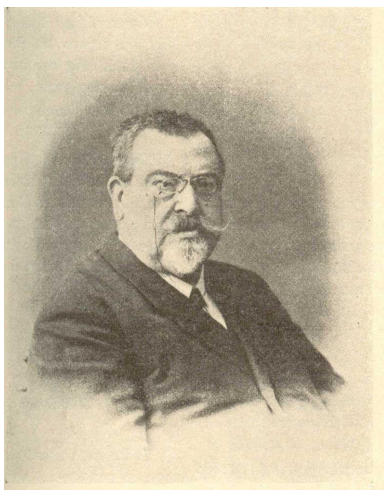
"Mr. Doctor: Va. Md. You would remember, no doubt, the good advice Antonio Nebrija gave us in his last lessons. Never look down, as said such an estimable professor, on the slightest circumstance, since it can sometimes cause the greatest events. A recent incident, which I hasten to communicate, demonstrates the council's good sense. You already know how pleased Don Fernando is when playing chess. As all people fond of such complicated game, he attaches the greatest importance to the outcome of the game. Really clever, cunning, would write, except for the well-earned respect we owe to His Highness, leaves in calculated neglect the pieces of his game to mock

¹¹⁴ Indeed there was such character:

MARTÍNEZ DE LA ROSA, FRANCISCO (1834) *Hernán Pérez del Pulgar, el de las hazañas: bosquejo histórico*. Madrid: [s...] (Don Thomas Jordan's printing house)

¹¹⁵ Andrés Bernáldez, priest of the palaces, wrote "Memorias del reinado de los Reyes Católicos".

then, the unwary who decides to take them, confusing as mistakes what really are devious decoys.



Dr. Jose Tolosa y Carreras y (1846-1916). (Courtesy of Joseph Alio)
Magnificent didactician and father of chess problem in Spain

Yesterday, despite the high heat which would invite to take a nap instead of wrecking one's brain, determined to kill the first hours of the afternoon playing a game against Fonseca, who is one of his usual victims? The meeting took place at the Queen's private rooms and there attended, among others, the Count of Tendilla, Ponce de León, Gonzalo de Córdoba, and myself who were appointed judges of field. Some noble ladies grouped around a huge loom next to one of the wide windows of the room were giving the finishing touches to a magnificent tapestry assigned to Our Lady of the Pillar. The old Beatriz Galindez - la Latina (that's how courtiers call her), was talking to the two in Latin while Don Fernando, taking care only of his game, was beating Fonseca. At this time a page hand lifted the curtain corresponding to the front door of the hall and introduced Fray Fernández de Talavera, Ávila bishop and Queen's confessor.

After the virtuous prelate greeted the royal spouses we hastened to question Mrs. Isabel, praying he told the decisions regarding the Genoese Christopher Columbus. I already wrote in another of my epistles the bold

projects that encourage, through thick and thin, such daring navigator; projects more known today than Mingo Revulgo's verses. Many people call him crazy, very few consider him a smart man. It is said that he now aims, I believe with good reason, the appointment of Admiral to take over the command of the small fleet that must sail bound for unknown lands, or perhaps reach the east coast of Asia where the golden island Cipango described by Marco Polo is. But as they go on bickering about the granting of the expressed dignity, which would equal the applicant to our Admiral of Castile, the common people murmured that Columbus had taken around Palos waiting for the negotiations to finish and decided to abandon Spain if they did not give him what he demanded.



Columbus asking for help from the Queen Isabella the Catholic

V. Sría,. now you would understand the reason behind the question stated above and made by Fray F. Talavera to Mrs. Isabel. Although I opened my ears, I could not understand the response of our Sovereign pious; I could only hear the voice of la Latina which in a dominant tone claimed: —If it was just a matter of money, I think bargaining it would result in prejudice, since, as Dyonisio Cato already mentioned in his distich,'no dubites cum magna

petas, impendere parva'. But now also asked is dignity that it is not good to lavish. Thus I go back to old habits, thinking it's arch-extravagant to claim that there exists land under our feet where men walk upside down like flies.

As these words were spoken out loud and with some liveliness, they clearly reached the ears of those who were there, including those of both players absorbed in their game. Fonseca, who had his game in a terrible state, took advantage of the occasion to break the silence with the hope of distracting his formidable opponent. "As for me," he said,, "I consider Cosmes Indicopleustes: the world is square as this board and it's surrounded by water on all sides, after which there is only abyss. For that reason the Arabs in their navigation charts paint at the end of the ocean a grim black hand ready to sink the reckless who dare to approach the bottomless abyss."

"Seriously, seriously, Mr. Fonseca" argued Fray F. de Talavera "you make me fall into the temptation to remind what was said by Mr. Alfonso the Wise in similar circumstances: 'If the world is that way, God should have consulted me before creating it, perhaps I could have given him some good advice.'"

Meanwhile Mrs. Isabel, who had approached the table where the game is played, told her regal husband: "Sir, don't you think we might grant Columbus the Admiral position, but only in the lands and continents he could acquire in the ocean?" Thus the prerogatives enjoyed in his district by the great Admiral of Castile would be safe.

"We will take care of that later." said the King, thoughtful and not paying much attention to the plays.

Fonseca saw the opportunity, and skillfully taking advantage of the mistakes committed by his adversary soon quickly achieved superiority in the game.

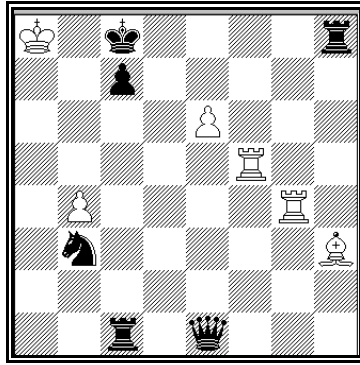
"Your Highness's king has imitated the reckless navigators approaching the abyss too closely; the black hand will catch it and it will be hopelessly lost."

"Malhaya the Genoese!" muttered Mr. Fernando frowning. "I will lose an easy game."

And tried to parry the blow with some cleverly laid hinder. Fonseca did not take the bait and his opponent lost more and more ground each time.

"Which is to say" dared Fonseca to say while rubbing his hands "the fight cannot last much longer. Your Highness has no other choice but to bend the towers to avoid the immediate check."

“But sir” refuted Mrs. Isabel “am I blind or isn't the white winning?”



And suiting the action to the word, she held her husband's hand while he was going to execute the maneuver indicated by Fonseca. Mr. Fernando, still grumpy and influenced by the urgent check of the enemy tower, could not find the moves needed to win. He raised his head as if looking for aid; their eyes met with mine, which claimed victory. Taking his right hand to his wide and noble forehead he got immersed in his thoughts for a long time again. His face finally lit up, a placid smile appeared, and then spoke with a forceful accent:



"Fonseca, you are dead; you aren't worth my distractions." And quickly made the moves needed for the check.

Then the king arose from his seat and facing la Latina said wryly: "So, Mrs. Beatriz, what did you say recently about men and flies?" "Sir, no one can claim not to have missed once. Plinio says it all: 'Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit'".

"You believe thus that it is wise to change one's own advice. I too" added Mr. Fernando "understand it that way, and I am thinking of ordering Mr. Juan de Colona to extend the naming of Admiral in favor of Columbus, as your friend the Queen has suggested." Mrs. Isabel then called one of his pages. "Alonso, ride immediately and run to meet Christopher Columbus who follows the route of Palos de Moguer. Tell him to come back soon and hopeful to our Santa Fe royals."

"Now you see, Mr. Doctor. Is it not the same as repeating what Antonio de Nebrija told us - that the smallest things are sometimes causes of great events? If the Genoese eventually discover lands, as I hope and look forward to, it may be said that the accurate and on time movement of a chess pawn had a big influence on the supposed event»."



Running to meet Columbus

The texts in question don't inspire me with much confidence since I suspect that there was a change in them. It would be a story too good to be true. However, I do believe in similar texts to those above in the aforementioned file and, as I have said before, it's advisable to do an in-depth study of these texts in order to know where and what they really are, since the exact content is really important for chess history... Apparently the cards in the file are dated February 2 and 4

1492¹¹⁶, but I do not know the number and location of the file. The texts above are too important for both the chess and the new powerful king history to leave out of this book.



**The sword of Queen Isabel the Catholic,
determining factor for the resolution of the poem**
Courtesy of the company Swords from Toledo - experts in ancient swords
(www.swordsfromtoledo.com)¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Granada was already in the hands of Castile in January 1492.

¹¹⁷ Prescott, William Hickling (1838). History Of The Reign of Ferdinand And Isabella, The Catholic, of Spain. Volumen I. He stated the following:
On learning Henry's death, Isabella signified to the inhabitants of Segovia, where she then resided, her desire of being proclaimed queen in that city, with the solemnities usual on such occasions. Accordingly, on the following morning, being the 13th of December, 1474, a numerous assembly, consisting of the nobles, clergy, and public magistrates in their robes of office, waited on her at the alcazar or castle, and, receiving her under a canopy of rich brocade, escorted her in solemn procession to the principal square of the city, where a broad platform or scaffold had been erected for the performance of the ceremony. Isabella, royally attired, rode on a Spanish jennet whose bridle was held by two of the civic functionaries, while an officer of her court preceded her on horseback, bearing aloft a **naked sword**, the symbol of sovereignty. On arriving at the square she alighted from her palfrey, and, ascending the platform, seated herself on a throne which had been prepared for her. A herald with a loud voice proclaimed, "Castile, Castile for the king Don Ferdinand and his consort Doña Isabella, queen proprietor (*reina propietaria*) of these kingdoms!" The royal standards were then unfurled, while the peal of bells and the discharge of ordnance from the castle publicly announced the accession of the new sovereign. Isabella, after receiving the homage of her subjects, and swearing to maintain inviolate the liberties of the realm, descended from the platform, and, attended by the same *cortège*, moved slowly towards the cathedral church; where, after Te Deum had been chanted, she prostrated herself before the principal altar, and, returning thanks to the Almighty for the protection hitherto vouchsafed her, implored him to enlighten her future counsels, so that she might discharge the high trust reposed in

CONCLUSION:

Its evidenced by the scachs d'amor poem that it is the first preserved text on modern chess in which we see the new queen or queen for the first time, that is, the piece with the new and current movement.

The actual distinction is precisely what leads the 3 poets to completely postpone the term *dona* which is replaced by King -lady-, a term that would be, none other than, the one that would baptize the new chess: ***The king -lady- chess.***

The introduction of the term king -lady- has nothing to do with the *guy de dames* French (weak piece) or with any French manuscript where the word 'king' -lady- was used. The word king -lady- in chess has been developed in Spain in the sense of a new powerful piece regardless of France.

The poem is written after 1474, because at this time, precisely on December 13, Isabel was crowned queen in Alcázar de Segovia and the sword of justice had been brought before the queen. The poets say it clearly in his song 54: **"achieves the dignity of the Queen by giving her the sword, scepter and throne"**, something very unusual in recent years. But poets do not forget to mention this important fact that really happened in Alcázar de Segovia.

It is not subject to appeal that the poem includes a match disputed completely by the rules of modern chess (bishop and king with the

her, with equity and wisdom. Such were the simple forms that attended the coronation of the monarchs of Castile, previously to the sixteenth century.

Prescott used the following manuscripts or books:

Bernaldez, Reyes Católicos, MS., cap. 10.--Carbajal, Anales, MS., año 75.--Alonso de Palencia, Corónica, MS., part. 2, cap. 93.--L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 155.--Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 2, dial. 3.

current movement) fact that, actually, was already pointed out by Paluzie in 1912.

A remarkable aspect of the poem, which distinguishes it from other books and manuscripts of his time, is that, in the poem, there is no trace of the old chess as it does in other contemporary manuscripts. The reason is very simple: who supports the new way to play, wants nothing of the old chess.

CHAPTER 22

The Definitive Proof of the Valencian Origins of Modern Chess

José Antonio Garzón Roger

*Ignorance is not knowing distinguish between
What needs demonstration and what does not need it*
ARISTOTLE

The argument for the Valencian genesis of modern chess, which also applies to the game of draughts, is strengthened and consolidated by the fact that it unexpectedly has in its favour the first two documented references to the new game of chess. The book by Francesch Vicent from 1495 was the first treatise on chess, with 100 problems and diagrams. The manuscript *Scachs d'amor*, which preceded it, provides greater assurance, not only because of the book's contents, but also by virtue of its very motivation (a book on medieval chess would never have been printed in Valencia, for modern chess had already been played in this city for 20 years).

Unfortunately, we still have not been able to find a single copy of Vicent's book, and we have not given up this arduous-but necessary-quest. However, the long exile of this first book about chess published in the world is made more bearable by the fact that the manuscript *Scachs d'amor*¹¹⁸ gives us great certainty.

We have to study again this lovely Valencian poem, in light of the rigorous research conducted by Dr. Govert Westerveld. His findings call for a reconsideration of the poem, whose importance is crucial to

¹¹⁸ Unfortunately the whereabouts of the original MS are also unknown. It was probably lost during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). Thanks to the fervor and love of culture of bibliophile Mr. Ramón Miquel i Planas, who photographed the poem in its entirety, the importance of this treasure for the history of chess has been established and preserved.

the History of Chess and Draughts. If, as he claims, the model for the great revolution that took place in chess (and that gave rise, a few years later, to the origin of Spanish draughts) were none other than Queen Isabella of Castile, the powerful Lady on the scene of Spanish life, fostering therefore her beautiful nemesis on the miniature chequered board, we should find conclusive evidence in the poem after a pertinent review. And we found such evidence much quicker than we imagined.

Stanza I

Castellvi - (Marc)

1 Trobant se Marc ab Venus en un temple,
2 ensemps tenint Mercuri [en] sa presència,
3 ordi un joch de scachs, ab nou exemple:
4 prenent Raho per Rey sens preheminiència;
5 la Voluntat per Reyna 'b gran potencia;
6 los Pensaments per sos Orfils contemple;
7 Cavalls, Lahors ab dolca eloqüència;
8 Rochs son Desigs que 'ncenen la membria;
9 Peons, Serveys pugnans per la victòria.

Prose translation (after the Spanish translation by Miquel i Planas, 1914):

As Mars met Venus in a temple,
and being both in the presence of Mercury,
Mars devised a game of Chess such
as had never been seen before.
Taking Reason for King without pre-eminence
and Will for a Queen of great power,
choosing Thoughts as Bishops and
as Knights the praises of sweet eloquence,
he Castles are Desires that inflame memory
and the Pawns are Services that fight for Victory.

“Taking Reason for King without pre-eminence and Will for a Queen of great Power”

The text could not be more eloquent: it refers by mimicry to the new Spanish Crown, which had been heading relentlessly towards unification since 1475¹¹⁹. It seemed clear that the King and Queen would share their power equally, therefore making the Queen powerful (like on the chessboard). The Queen is identified by two key ideas: Will and Beauty, which both seem to have been attributes of the Queen of Castile.

The poem is the first document where the new Queen (‘Reina’, ‘Dama’) appears in the History of Chess. The change is indicated in the first stanza, which had gone unnoticed up to now: Mars devised a game of Chess such as had never been seen before. This stanza by itself, further reinforced by the constant allusions to new Chess in the poem, indicates that we are witnessing the birth of a new type of Chess. Therefore, the importance of the poem’s date is that it tells us with certainty the birth date of modern Chess. These are not coded messages but explicit statements. Interestingly, the poets used these two terms indiscriminately¹²⁰ to designate the powerful piece. For them, they were complete synonyms.. In Lucena (1497), ‘Dama’ is only the term used, which is significant since it does not contain the references to real life and the monarchy. The even use of both Dama and Reina¹²¹ freed them, at the same time, from any etymological obligations. The poets’ word choice was a question of style, of personal taste.

¹¹⁹ On 15 January 1475, the monarchy laid the foundations for the future Spain by signing the Concord of Segovia, and was definitively unified in 1479. The monarchs formed an inseparable unit, establishing between them an equal share of power.

¹²⁰ The Queen (Reina) is mentioned 30 times and the Lady (Dama) 47. Comparing this with Lucena’s book, it is clear that Valencian poets considered the Queen as their new «dama».

¹²¹ The poem itself provides clear evidence on this balanced use of the two terms. For example, stanza 28 begins: Castellvi: Juga Cauall de Reyna a quatre de Cauall de Dama (‘Castellvi Plays Queen’s knight to Lady’s knight four’.)



Narcís Vinyoles

If dama ('lady'), as Coromines¹²² states, comes from the French *dame*, which in turn is derived from the Latin *domina*, then the Valencian term *dona* ('woman') has the same origin, deriving from the contraction *domina* of the Latin term *domina*.

This explains why we find the following verse in *L'Espill*, by Jaume Roig (1459-1460):

Escac pel roc/tens per la dona: /sus mat te dona (a free translation: *A check with the rook, the tense lady gives you a checkmate.*)

Both escac and sus curiously mean 'check'. We mustn't see in this text an explicit antecedent of the new queen. As I have pointed out in my book, the piece that accompanies the King was already called the Queen in the various medieval translations of Cessolis (mirroring what was happening in the incipient kingdoms forming then), but it always had the old range of movement (therefore lacking almost any power). According to Coromines (in the aforementioned book), Dama begins to appear in Catalan texts after 1400 and is considered an etymological duplicate of dona, but already with the meaning of a distinguished

¹²² Coromines, Joan (1995). *Diccionari Etimològic i Complementari de la Llengua Catalana*. Vol. III, p. 16. Barcelona (1st Edition, 1982).

dona or 'Lady'.. It is precisely this distinction which prompts the three poets to completely disregard the term dona, replacing it with Dama, and this is the term which would be used later to baptise the new chess: El ajedrez de la dama.

The mistake of linking the origins of draughts and modern chess only through etymological criteria

Ever since I have known Govert Westerveld, he has always surprised me by his qualities, unfortunately too uncommon among researchers, such as the enormous scientific rigour that guides his research and, especially, the honesty and authenticity with which he incorporates the criticism his work occasionally receives. Perhaps both qualities stem from the same idea: true scientific research should integrate possible criticism and, when the time comes, future criticism.

It seems, however, that criticism in this case comes more from the anxiety Westerveld's research arouses among his critics (actually, his contributions have partly upset the Official History of Draughts, and I would dare say that of Chess as well), than from sound convictions that can be supported with irrefutable evidence.

Therefore, when Draughts historian K.W. Kruijswijk tried to challenge Westerveld's 12 arguments regarding Timoneda's book (1635)-we all know since the time of the Sophists¹²³ about the persuasive power of words-, Westerveld included this criticism in his later work with disarming honesty. Time has shown that Westerveld was right and that his basic idea, which supported his other arguments, was really irrefutable: the texts in Timoneda's book are, in fact, from the century before. Furthermore, Professor Fuster, a true Timoneda expert,

¹²³ The old story from Ancient Greece, when Socrates was being condemned to death is well known. Lysias, the famous orator, offered him his services to conduct his defence and was convinced that he would obtain his absolution. But the philosopher, on the strength of his innocence, renounced his help, prioritising, above all, that the truth be known from his own mouth.

confirmed this to be true without hesitation after just looking at the book, which Westerveld showed him. As we will see further on, other important ideas Westerveld anticipated, such as the connection between the Timoneda book and books on chess, have far more significant consequences than one would initially expect.

Another historian, Van der Stoep, who was in favour of Westerveld in the Timoneda case, has made the etymology of the word *dama* the centre of his approach, claiming by virtue of this sole and secondary criterion the French origin of the game of draughts (*damas* in Spanish) and, by analogy, that of modern chess (also called *de la Dama*).

Suddenly, something that could serve us as a complementary idea, important but unable to stand on its own, becomes substantive, the decisive and insurmountable argument. In my opinion, this approach does not seem serious, but at any rate, we will tackle this issue, even if some of our reasons appear obvious.

Neither Westerveld nor myself argue with the French origin of *dama* (*dame*). Although, in the strict sense, the French word, in turn, comes from the German *dam* and both come from the Latin term *domina*.

I understand that what these historians are saying is that the use of *dame* became prevalent in Medieval French literature, a process which culminated in the 15th century. *La belle dame sans merci*, by Alain Chartier, dating from 1424, marks the turning point in the debate on the condition of women¹²⁴, considered in misogynistic terms. This also occurred in the Valencian book mentioned above, *L'Espill*, by Jaume Roig (1459-1460), which has even been entitled in some editions *Libre de les dones* ('The Book of Women').

In fact, far from believing that the word *dama* in the 15th century was a laudatory or a combative term, actually this word usually appears in anti-feminist contexts. Even in Lucena's famous treatise we find an insurmountable contradiction.

On one hand we have the chess text, where the new piece, the Lady, is praised. But in Lucena's book *Repetición de Amores*, which

¹²⁴ For more information see: Antonia Carré. *Espill*. Jaume Roig. Teide, Barcelona, 1994.

precedes the technical chess book, we find an anti-feminist claim, typical¹²⁵ of the era. This confirms my idea that to truly understand Lucena's chess treatise we must also study the previous work, *Repetición de Amores*. In *Repetición*, Lucena significantly always speaks of the muger, or woman, just as Roig, in his work *Espill*, speaks of the dona. The queen (dama) that permeates his chess treatise is not found anywhere. This fact, without any further pieces of evidence, and many exist, leads us to completely discard Lucena as the inventor of anything related to the creation of modern chess. He did, however, popularise greatly the new way of playing, first through his book and later with the manuscripts of Gotinga and Paris/Place.

Therefore, the word Dama, as Westerveld states, developed independently from the French, since in Spain it applied to the chess game. As we have seen, the appearance of the word dama in Valencian and Spanish texts had a very important rehabilitating effect from the prevalent anti-feminism. The Dama of the poets is now a distinguished Lady, which is made clear from the beginning. An idealisation process transformed the woman into the Lady, which was supported and inspired by the highest model: Queen Isabella. Seeing the poem through Westerveld's point of view, everything makes perfect sense and certain interpretations we made according to technical or set criteria, have now become unnecessary.

The medieval texts of the Cessolis family developed the other Latin term for the chess piece that represented the King's consort: Regina. But it continued to be a weak piece¹²⁶. Its emergence is easily explained: at the end of the Middle Ages, the new emerging kingdoms

¹²⁵ Barbara Matulka's work on the subject stands out: "*An anti-feminist treatise of Fifteenth-century Spain. Lucena's Repetición de amores*". Institute of French Studies. Comparative Literature Studies. New York, 1931

¹²⁶ Also in the technical texts, the collection of problems of the Bonus Socius and Civis Bononiae families, we always find a weak queen, that is, she continues to have the archaic move range of the medieval "fers". Actually, as we shall see later, the powerful queen was not found in either France or Italy until the 16th century, when it was brought from Spain. Therefore, they gave the queen derogatory names (mad, rabid).

had monarchies in which the Queen scarcely had any power, but she remained the King's consort. This change had to be reflected on the chessboard, where the medieval Arabic fers had become an archaism. Whether through knowledge of French literature in *Les échecs amoureux*¹²⁷, or whatever other reason, this does not seem very relevant, since we have a point of departure even if we are doing the most original thing in the world. For the first time, and with the sense of dignity we have pointed out, the Powerful Queen, appears in all her glory in a chess text, *Scachs d'amor*, and on the chessboard, with all her might: moving confidently throughout her kingdom to its outermost edges, limited only by its actual boundaries. Never has the Queen been so powerful in chess as at the time of her creation, and this cannot be a coincidence.

So that there would be no doubt that Dama is the new Queen, they use the two names indiscriminately to refer to the new piece. Fenollar, Castellví and Vinyoles could very well have called the new game of chess "de la reina" but the use of the term dama simply seemed more beautiful and poetic to them. This preference for Dama is a question of personal taste and style. The real revolution and innovation happened on the chessboard, for the first time in the History of Chess.

Finally, if we unjustifiably privileged the etymological criteria, we would have to answer this question: how could modern chess have emerged from countries such as France or Italy if we take into account the names they gave the new chess:

¹²⁷ For an overview of the allegorical texts regarding Chess, we recommend the outstanding work by Salvador Juanpere i Aguiló, which we have already mentioned: *Scachs d'amor. Narcís Vinyoles*. Interserveis Emporda, Figueres, 1992. It is precisely from this comparison that, in our opinion, two decisive factors are proven: the true nature of *Scachs d'amor*, besides from its lovely poetic content, is that it passes on to us the rules of modern Chess, genuinely Valencian. Therefore, the weak Queen with her extremely limited moves, for example of French texts, bears no relation whatsoever to the new Powerful dama or Queen of the Valencian people, and that, therefore, it is a Spanish piece that was born with even more power than it would have later, when her moves became consolidated in practice.

France: de la dame enragée (mad chess)

Italy: de la donna alla rabiosa (mad chess)

The contempt shown by both the French and Italian expressions is an indication of how the new chess was received in these countries, where it could not have been native, according to what we have said. It shows the unpleasant surprise the devastating power of the new piece caused in these countries. There was no trace of pride in the naming of the new piece.

It was completely different in Spain, the country where modern chess emerged. The beautiful, simple expression couldn't be clearer:

The ajedrez de la dama ('queen's chess') was opposed to el viejo ('old [chess]'). We are lyrically told, with an insurmountable, stark phrase, that the time of the Lady, the woman, has come, and the bad times ('the old') are gone.



Bernard Fenollar, author of the new rules

Fenollar's rules of modern Chess and the birth of the all-powerful lady or queen. The keys for the definitive dating.

Although sometimes the importance of the impressive and pioneer document about modern Chess, *Scachs d'amor*, is downplayed, it is indisputable that the poem includes a hard-fought game, complete with the rules of modern Chess (bishop and queen with current moves), a fact which Paluzié already pointed out in 1912¹²⁸.

Another notable aspect of the manuscript is its explicit allusions to the alteration of the chess game, which gives the impression it was happening at that very moment, using very clear expressions, always with reference to the Queen: *still nouell, la ley de nostre escola* ('a new style, the rules of our school'). The most important stanza is number 54:

Stanza 54

Fenollar. (Diu que la Reyna vagie axi com tots,
sino Cavall)
478 Mas nostre joch de nou vol enremar se
479 stil novel e strany a qui bel mira,
480 prenent lo pom, lo ceptre la cadira.
48: car, sobretot, la Reyna fa honrar se.
482 Donchs, puix que diu que mes val e mes tira,
483 per tot lo camp pot mol be passegar se,
484 mas tocre no, per temor ni per ira.
485 Quant mes se veu la libertat altiva,
486 mes tembre deu de caure may cativa.

Prose translation (after Miquel i Planas, 1914):

"I say that the Queen shall have the moves of all the pieces,
save the Knight."
But our game still wants to adorn itself,
with a new and surprising style

¹²⁸ Paluzie y Lucena, José (1912). *Manual de Ajedrez*. Vol. III. Part VI, Miscelánea: Bibliografía Española de Ajedrez. Primer Ensayo p. 257.

for mainly the Queen's dignity is enhanced,
as she is given the sword, the sceptre and the throne.
Therefore, since it is said that she is the most worthy one
and the most achieving,
may she stroll with ease through the entire field,
albeit without straying, for fear or anger.
The greater her freedom,
the more she should fear being made captive".

Fenollar

"I say that the Queen shall have the
moves of all the pieces save the Knight."

But our game still wants to adorn itself with a new and surprising style for mainly the Queen's dignity is enhanced, as she is given the sword, the sceptre and the throne. This brief text is one of the most important in the History of Chess, because it implies that they are the ones who created the new piece¹²⁹ and anticipates the surprise that her move would cause. Again it is clear that an existing Queen (Isabella) was being evoked because a surprisingly precise description of an important real-life event is mentioned:

Queen Isabella of Castile was crowned in the Alcázar of Segovia 13 December 1474. The sword of justice was raised in front of the Queen, just as the sceptre and the throne were given to her. This historic

¹²⁹ In my opinion, this is the heart of the matter, and I was able to prove it to the Italian historian Alessandro Sanvito in a letter. The following is a paragraph taken from that letter:

"...numerous references are made in the poem to the change of rules, and it makes the statement that it was this school-the Valencian one-that proposed the Queen's new range of movements. The fact that they are introducing this new piece is much more important to me than even the date, because it indicates that it is not necessary to research any further. As you know, all this movement occurred in Valencia during its Golden Age, when it had a very active trade with Italy. The first 3 known books on the game of draughts were published in this same city (in the 16th century), with the peculiarity that the key piece, like in chess, went through a profound transformation. This has been analysed in detail by Govert Westerveld, an authority on the subject!"

episode was included by the poets in the written passage, where it is presented as a very new and surprising event on the chessboard.



Queen Isabella I of Castile

This cannot be a coincidence and it follows that the poem was written after the coronation of the Queen (c.1475) but not much later, because the idea of newness is inherent in the entire poem.

It also calls our attention that when the Queen's power is described, it is said that she has the power of all the pieces except that of the Knight¹³⁰, whereas nowadays we would say that this piece's range of movement is a combination of the Rook and the Bishop. But the poets' formula is eloquent:

they created a piece that unites the strength and virtues of all of her people (including the King). This cannot be coincidental, either.

Stanza 54 contains a treasure for the History of Chess: It takes us to the point in time when new chess was created (c. 1475) and gives us the name of the innovators (the poets themselves), which makes it unnecessary to search any further for this great truth. The task of establishing recognition for this discovery still remains, but its authenticity guarantees its success.

Stanzas 57, 60 and 63 also allude to the movement of the Queen, but the references are so allegorical and poetic that first I thought it was an exercise in stylistic license, rather than a series of technical rules about the game. However, if we keep in mind the reference to Queen Isabella it all makes sense.

Stanza 57

Fenollar (Lo Peo no puga muntar a Dama ni hague pus d'una Dama)

505 Y si-ls antichs, per auumentar la casta,
506 sens altre sguart de ley ni de justicia,
507 de baixa sanch y de vilana pasta
508 consenten fer mil Reynes per malicia,
509 dien les leys d'amorosa malicia,

¹³⁰ Lucena makes here the only clarification about the rules that can be strictly attributed to him: the possibility that in the first move the promoted queen could behave as a Knight, "the game that I use", Lucena says. Therefore, the source for this book, especially in regards to modern chess, Vicent's manual, contained the remaining rules, which Lucena transcribed: the rules of the queen's chess.

510 que'l dyamant en Por pus fi s'encasta,
511 y en hun encast relluu ab gran claricia.
512 L'amant e fel sol d'una s'anamora;
513 l'ingrat infel les ydoles adora.

Prose translation (after Miquel i Planas, 1914):

The pawn cannot be promoted to Queen,
let there be but one Queen.
And though the elders maliciously allow a thousand Queens
to rise from low blood and common stock,
the laws of loving chivalry say
that a diamond should be mounted on the finest gold,
and when it is so mounted, it sparkles with great brightness.
The faithful lover only falls in love with one lady;
the ingrate and unfaithful one adores all idols.

Fenollar. "The pawn cannot be promoted to queen, let there be
but one Queen."

The poets themselves give the King a clear and unmistakable
message of fidelity to his spouse:

"And though the elders¹³¹ maliciously allow a thousand Queens¹³² to
rise from low blood and common stock (...) The faithful lover only
falls in love with one lady."

¹³¹ This reference to the former multiple queening of the fers shows the poets' knowledge of medieval games.

¹³² In his study *El incunable de Lucena. Primer Arte de Ajedrez Moderno* (Ediciones Polifemo, Madrid, 1997), historian Joaquin Pérez de Arraiga presents the Valencian manuscript in such a biased way (he only comments on three secondary rules regarding the new queen and omits the main one, where for the first time in the History of chess the new movements of the current piece are described) that he concludes it must have referred to some special rules for a game played among gentlemen. Of course, it was something entirely different: we are witnessing the birth of new chess and, seemingly, according to these original rules, the Queen had even more power then than she does now. Two old rules that formerly had applied only to the King also applied to the Queen: the interdiction of the two rival pieces to fight each other and the loss of the game in the event of capture (check mate to the queen).

Stanza 60

Fenollar (Que les Reynes nos puguen prendre la una ab l'altre)

532 Puix nostre stil tot lo poder transporta

533 dels Rys amant[s] a les Reybes amades,

534 com entre Reys ferir se no-s comporta,

535 seran tambe les Reynes atrevades;

536 mas puguen ser dels altres guerrejades,

537 y pendre les, si no porten escorta:

538 sols en aco romanen limitades.

539 Per co diu be la ley de nostre escola

540 que no den may la Dama restar sola.

Prose translation (after Miquel i Planas, 1914):

“Let the Queens be unable to capture one another”

Since, according to our style,

all the power of the loving Kings is transferred

to the beloved Queens,

and since Kings are not allowed to attack one another,

so let the Queens have a truce.

Nonetheless, they can be engaged by anyone

and even be captured if they are unescorted:

this is the only limitation to their capabilities.

The other rule, preventing the promotion to a higher position if the original Queen is still on the board, cannot be approached in critical or archaic terms, much less in the beginnings of new chess. Even Philidor was not in favour of multiple and higher queening. The recent discovery (1997) of an important chess manuscript in Spain entitled *Leyes Generales del Juego del Axedrez* (1791) sheds light on the rules used in Spain during the 18th century. Prior to this, we only had had Minguet's book whose rules were completely anachronistic. I learned about this manuscript thanks to the historian Antonio López de Zuazo who was responsible for issuing a facsimile edition, with an interesting study, before it was auctioned. In Law V we can read: “The pawn that arrives to the last row cannot be rnade into a Queen if the owner of that pawn still has his own.” The text couldn't be clearer. According to López de Zuazo, this important manuscript (which Paluzie does not mention in his *Ensayo de Bibliografía Española* of 1912) was written at the request of Francisco González de Bassecourt, Conde Asalto and Capitán General of Catalonia, to stand as the official rules of the game when arguments arose in the Palace.

So, the rules of our school properly state that the Queen must never be left alone.



Grabado de André François Danican Philidor

Fenollar “Let the Queens be unable to capture o another”

“Since, according to our style, all the power of the loving Kings is transferred to the beloved Queens, and since Kings are not allowed to attack one another, so let the Queens have a truce. Nonetheless, they can be engaged by anybody an even be captured if they are unescorted: this is the only limitation to their capabilities. So, the rules of our school properly state that the Queen must never be left alone.”

I finally understood this rule. So great was their desire to make the Queen an equal of the King, that they extended to her to the concept of the Ba King (Stanza 48). In Arab chess this was the most common form of Victory; it consisted in taking all your enemy’s pieces. It was, therefore, a very materialistic rule, which was still adopted by Ruy López in 1561.

Stanza 63

Fenollar

(Si-s pert la Reyna, que sia perdut lo joch)

559 Mercuri diu que ja, puix tant comprenen,

560 les Reynes tals, que'n tot poden y manen,

561 si per mal cars, los enemichs les prenen,

562 que los estols s'abaten y s'aplanen;

563 donchs, guarden se gosant no les enganen,

564 car per temor si elles no-s defenen

565 ab son esforc, no filen ni debanen.

566 Vergonya y por virtut son en la dama;

567 en l'om empaixs, contraris a gran fama.

Prose translation (after Miquel i Planas, 1914):

If the Queen is lost, the game is lost.

Mercury says that since the Queens are so valuable

and that their power and leadership are unrivalled,

if by misfortune the enemy captures them,

their armies must give in and surrender.

Be careful and don't allow them to be tricked

on account of being too daring for,

if through fear they don't find the strength for their own defence,

they will be powerless.

Shame and fear are virtues in women;

in men they are contrary to good fame.

Fenollar "If the Queen is lost, the game is lost."

"Mercury says that, seeing as the Queens are so valuable and

that their power and leadership are unmatched,

if by misfortune the enemy captures them,

their armies must give in and surrender..."

For an analysis of these three last general rules, I refer the reader to my study of the Vicent's incunabulum (2001), since it seems inappropriate to make a literal interpretation. My doubts vanished

when I considered them as three rules which completely equated the powers of the King and Queen, as it happened in real life. None of the King's privileges would be denied to the Queen.

An aspect of the poem that has never been pointed out, and which distinguishes it from the ensuing texts in the sequence of sources about modern chess (Vicent, 1495; Lucena, 1497; MS. From El Escorial, c.1500; Casanantense MS., 1511; even Ruy López, 1561), is that this poem does not include any reference to old chess, which is not the case in these other documents. The reason is very simple: those who propose the new way of playing do not want to discuss the old. They want their new ideas to become established. We are witnessing the formulation of new chess.

The technical rules that appear in the poem can help us date the manuscript together with the analysis of the poetic text-which suggests that it was a work of youth, as do other biographical elements of the poeta-but especially they can help us determine the true purpose of the poem's composition: a great gift to Queen Isabella and her spouse and an analogy between the real-life situation on the great game-board of life and the small chequered board, which now faithfully imitates the former.

Given the importance of this unique and pioneering text in the History of chess, and after having studied it many hours in the course of many years, I believe I can state that, in addition to its rich allegorical content, full of poetic subtleties, the participation of Fenollar as referee is actually intended to voice the complete rules of the new chess they had just created. The terms Fenollar uses point this out (Law, decree, edict), but so does the meticulous analysis of the rules that are established:

The game rules announced by Fenollar

The birth of modern chess (c.1475)

1. It is understood that the moves of the rooks, the knights (both of which have stayed the same throughout the centuries) and the bishops¹³³ are not discussed. The moves of the King and pawns are indicated when they differ from Arab chess.

2. When a piece is touched, the move is definitive¹³⁴ (Stanza 6)

3. The King's leap to the third square in the first move. This move is described for the first time in a technical document (Stanza 15), while establishing some limitations that foreshadow the current castling:

3.1 The King cannot capture another piece with this leap. (Stanza 18)

3.2 The King cannot jump over other pieces¹³⁵ (Stanza 21).

¹³³ We have already shown our surprise about the fact that the bishop's move, which was also new, was not emphasised. The poet's command of this piece is even more striking: they move it along its usual squares and exchange him with the knight, a difficult comparison to gauge as their movement is so different. Perhaps the innovation of the Queen was so stunning that it eclipsed everything else. As I have mentioned in other work, the bishop may have acquired its current move prior to the queen. However, this explanation requires proof, which should stem from experimenting with the new rules of Chess. Up to now, no document has confirmed this hypothesis.

¹³⁴ In his outstanding work on the manuscript (*El Poema Scachs d'amor, Primer texto conservado sobre ajedrez moderno*. Editorial Jaque XXI, 1999), Ricardo Calvo points out that, in practice, this is the most important rule and that it appears in writing for the first time in the History of Chess.

¹³⁵ This rule is very important for dating the manuscript. The poets are aware of the Queen's capability of causing serious damage, a point unknown in Arab Chess. With great intuition, they foresee how to mitigate her power by seeking the King's safety. They used a privilege we have linked to the King's leap of joy written by Alfonso X the Wise. Some historians have mistaken the King's leap for a primitive form of castling done during two separate turns, but this was never the case. Castling is the evolution or finished form of the of the King's leap, according with the following evolutionary steps:

1. Leap to the third square (Scachs d'amor)

2. Leap to the third square over another piece (Vicent, Lucena)

3. Leap to the third square like a Knight (MS.Paris/Place [c. 1513],

Ruy López [1561].)

- 3.3 The leap cannot be performed under check. (Stanza 24)
- 4. The obligation of warning about a check. (Stanza 27)
- 5. Capture en passant¹³⁶ (Stanza 39)
- 6. Ways to end the game
 - 6.1 Stalemate (Stanza 45)
 - 6.2 Bare king (Stanza 48)
 - 6.3 Checkmate (Stanza 51)
- 7. The Queen's movement, for the first time in the History of Chess (Stanza 54)
 - 7.1 There can be only one Queen on the board (Stanza 57)
 - 7.2 Queens cannot capture one another. (Stanza 60)
 - 7.3 If the Queen is lost, the game is lost. (Stanza 63)

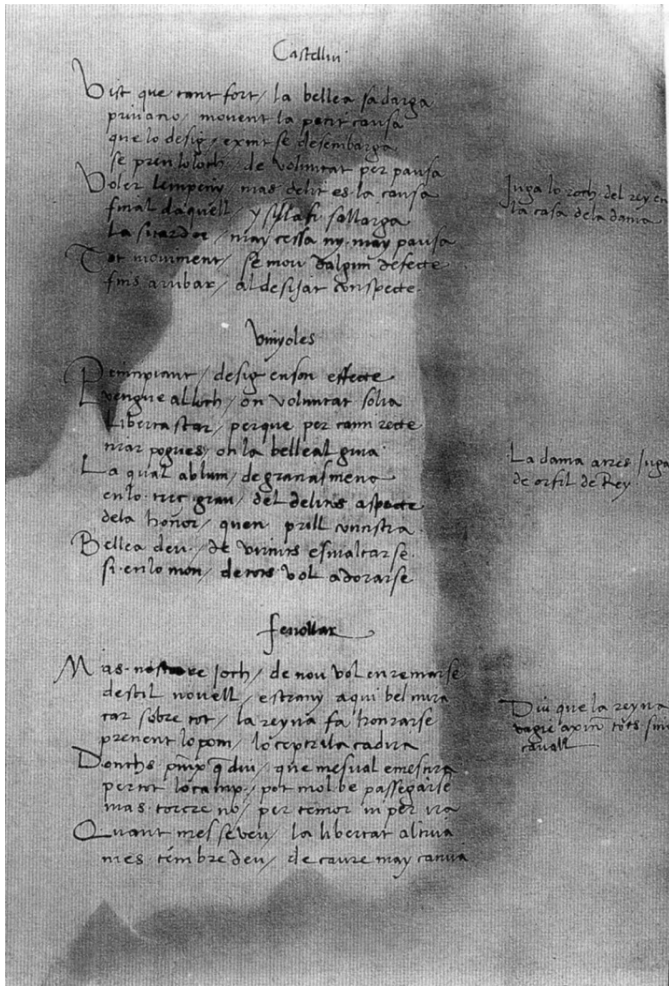


1479: The unification of Spain

4. The finished form of the leap, transposition, is confirmed by practice (Ruy López, 1561), with antecedents in Lucena (1497) and, even more clearly, in the Gotinga MS. (early 16th century) and MS. Paris/Place (c.1513).

5. Castling derived from transposition (its definitive introduction must have occurred in the Tournament of Madrid, in 1575, with the clash between the Italian School-supporters of castling and the Spanish School). Fenollar, Vinyoles, and Castellvi show surprising foresight as, together with the Queen, they introduced an adequate way of mitigating her power: the King's leap.

¹³⁶ This feature is inseparable from the pawn's initial two-square progression. Although Alfonso X the Wise had already formulated this rule, here it is stated in definitive terms since in King Alfonso's time, after the capture, the pawns lost the privilege of the initial two-square progression, and therefore their possibility of capturing en passant.



Important page of *Scachs d'Amor* (1475-1476). It includes stanza 56 describing for the first time in the history of chess the movement of the Queen or Lady. We are in the initial stage where the new chess is forged, as Fenollar cannot be more explicit: our game needs sprucing up with a surprising new style. It refers to the new piece that, like Queen Isabella I, is given the sword, scepter, and throne. The explicit references to the history of our country and the detailed analysis of the technical rules that set the poem allow us this dating, which harmonizes with the ideas of Govert Westerveld. Thanks to Miquel i Planas who photographed the MS. (his archive is preserved in the Library of Catalonia) the loss of the manuscript (1936-1939) could not diminish his greatness.

These are the essential rules of the first attempt to regulate the Queen's chess. It is advisable, as we have already suggested, to analyse the rules about the Queen as a whole and consider them as transitional rules. We believe that, from the beginning, Fenollar and his friends applied the King's two privileges to their new Queen, which leads to two basic conclusions:

1. That new chess had recently been created and was still in an experimental phase.

2. The connection with Queen Isabella, who had inspired the new piece, is reaffirmed; otherwise, it is difficult to understand the extension of these two privileges, unique to the monarchy, to the new piece. Only the parallel with the situation in real life could have motivated it.

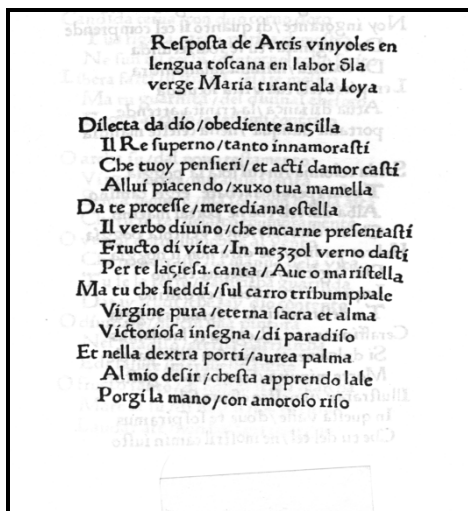
Everything points to the same conclusion: we are witnessing the moment in which new chess is forged. The Queen's chess is completely new. Later on, practice had to advise, for strict questions of game strategy, a curtailing of the Queen's power¹³⁷ regarding privileges, without reducing her range of movement. All this was solved in Valencia by 1495 and thus, the appropriateness of Vicent's book (1495), to show that the new chess was thoroughly accepted and already consolidated through practice.

Therefore, we now have more elements than ever for an adequate dating. I would like to thank the orientation and advice I got from Dr. Antoni Ferrando, author of some of the most complete studies¹³⁸ on the three poets and their time, a necessary reference for those who want to approach the subject rigorously. In terms of the history of Spanish culture, and even for philological reasons, it seems appropriate to date the work from the end of the 15th century. When I

¹³⁷ The powerful Queen was born even mightier when she was originally created in Valencia than she is today in her present form.

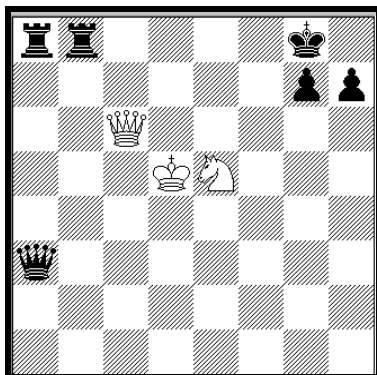
¹³⁸ Antoni Ferrando. Narcís Vinyoles i la seu obra. Universitat de Valencia. Facultat de Filologia. Valencia, 1978. His work entitled *Els Certàmens Poètics Valencians del Segle XIV al XIX*. (Institució Alfons el Magnanim. Diputació de Valencia. 1983) is also noteworthy and enlightening.

asked Dr. Ferrando about this subject, he told me that the possibilities for a more precise dating could be derived from the technical chess aspects contained in the poem.



Les trobes in lahors de la Verge Maria (Valencia, 1474). Detail of a page of the first book, strictly speaking, printed in Spain. Our three poets collaborate in the Marian contest that is an important detail to date the MS. Note that the response of Narcis Vinyoles is in Tuscan language. Valencia trade with Italy, where the Crown of Aragon extended its territories, was intense. Soon the new chess must have been exported. The possibility that the new chess had arrived in Italy earlier than the treaties (1495) was not supported by documentary evidence.

Ricardo Calvo (1999) gave it a very broad date (1470-1490), where there is hardly any room for error. We were in favour of concentrating on the first part of this period because we were interested in the year 1474, when the three poets submitted work for the competition in honor of the Virgin. This hypothesis is supported by the technical observations and it clearly shows that the queen was a completely new creation, just as the poets tell us, but we can also plainly see that she does not yet dominate her great combined power (compare this with problem 103 by Lucena, the well-known smothered mate, where the Queen is sacrificed).



Lucena, 103

Phrasing and features. A 5-move checkmate or less. With the Lady.

There is a condition: the black pieces cannot be captured (all blacks are secured).

Solution:

**1.De6 Rh8 2.Cf7 Rg8 3.Ch6 Rh8
4.Dg8 Tg8 6.Cf7#**

A jewel of Lucena's collection of problems is the celebrated stalemate that is presented here for the first (?) time in the history of chess. However, incomprehensibly, Lucena does not include this problem in his subsequent works (MS and MS Goettingen Paris / Place), without any reasonable explanation; as Lucena, of rare manner in his work, says of this composition: "It is very subtle." Averbach considered that the problem must be in the collection of Vincent and he proposes that it was Vincent who should have given a name to the problem.

We have already extensively formulated our opinion in the past, but according to what we know today we will take one more firm step: This position shows without further argument that the new chess had already been practiced for many years coexisting with the old way.

This problem is completely spurious to Arabic chess and not only by the existence of the lady, but by confining the black after phalanx of pawns.

Therefore we have in this beautiful composition a vivid testimony that unequivocally the book of Lucena is at least 20 years later than the MS. *Scachs d'Amor*, enough to overcome the ban on diving the king piece that

provides the poem (verse 21), and other many years to reach the practical conclusion that the best use of the jump is the maneuver known as transposition (TF1 and Rg1, jumping), a 2-step maneuver that it evokes, and is the antecedent of castling.

This unique composition valid in itself, the date that we consider likely is: 1475-1476.

And now we step forward as promised. As there is no plausible explanation why Lucena did not include the best game out of his collection in the MSS of the sixteenth century, we understand that there must have been a strong reason. It is easy to see that the position prior to sacrifice of the Lady with the enemy king in castling, must have been arisen in a live game. Therefore the names of the contenders could have been known. This could well be presented explicitly in the book of Vicent. The continued practice of 20 years of chess lady in Valencia could produce this beautiful composition. This hypothesis, which would give every reason to Averbach, explains the absence of it in Lucena's hindmost collections.

This does not prevent her from showing her strength: she already participates in the second move; both queens move several times, and it is the white queen who leads the checkmate (in her debut she forces the checkmate). Another technical rule, the King's leap (a precursor of castling) is formulated for the first time in a technical text, although in a stage prior to Lucena's (the king cannot jump over another piece-Stanza 21).

This information leads us to believe that this manuscript must older than the books by Vicent and Lucena, by at least 20 years. But we also perceive that this Queen's Chess is very new and it is being invented at that very moment. Was the new Chess created in Bernat Fenollar's literary circle, soon after the 1474 literary competition in honour of the Virgin Mary? We must take into account the sequence of historical events surrounding the new monarchs in the years 1475-1476. The poets seemed to know about these events, as they show in their work. Was their proposal also a gift to this new monarchy, whose very strong Queen had, in turn, inspired them?

Why did it remain unpublished although it is lovely, very well done and innovative? Did the king, who was actually their protector¹³⁹, not like it?



Narcis Vinyoles

Interestingly enough, this dating has been defended by other rigorous researchers on several occasions. Von der Lasa himself considered that new Chess had emerged in Spain around 1475¹⁴⁰. And this free spirit

¹³⁹ It is documented that the poets had had a long-term relationship with King Ferdinand even before his marriage. Vinyoles, the King's protégé, was already an advisor in 1468 and continued to have political offices until 1516. The name Castellví appears in a document dated September 1464, in which he is appointed cambrer of Prince Ferdinand. All of this historical data is perfectly referenced in the aforementioned work by Antoni Ferrando.

¹⁴⁰ Von der Lasa: *Zur Geschichte und Litteratur des Schachspiels Forschungen*. Leipzig, 1897. See also: *Les Echecs Modernes*. Henri Delaire, Paris, 1914, p. 29. He makes the comment that Von der Lasa attributed the reform in Chess to Spain and situated it in 1475.

exposed his ideas from his privileged and independent position as a knowledgeable Chess historian. It was not a coincidence that he was the first to publish a study on Lucena's work (1859), after a copy of the book was found at the Rio de Janeiro Library when he was the ambassador. His study led him to the conclusion that a work of that quality would have required new Chess to have developed for at least 20 years. He also realised the need to find Vicent's book, because he guessed it contained the secret of new chess. He dedicated years to its search, and never gave up the hope of finding it¹⁴¹. We cannot help but wonder, had he known about the manuscript *Scachs d'amor*, how easy it would have been for him to establish the logical chain of events that show modern Chess was born in Valencia. The best homage we can pay this great historian is to make an epigone worthy of his work, an independent, free, passionate quest for the truth, no matter where it lies.

Nowadays today Eales¹⁴² also dates new chess at 1475, and even though he is probably basing it on an erroneous date from the Gotinga manuscript, he gives special importance to Vicent's book¹⁴³ and the manuscript *Scachs d'amor*, noting that the latter describes the new rules of chess.

¹⁴¹ We found a letter sent to Dr. Tolosa y Carreras that the imminent problemist published in the magazine *El Campo*, Madrid, 16 May 1892, full of optimism and unyielding belief in his convictions. Von der Lasa suggests in this letter the possibility that Vicent added a factitious volume from what he believed and hid it in the body of the work, therefore making its future removal difficult. The hope of this great historian lives on in us and we venture to say, with full knowledge of the facts, that this much-awaited day is near.

¹⁴² Eales, Richard. *Chess. The History of the Game*. Batsford, 1985.

¹⁴³ Eales suggests that Vicent's book is a firm candidate as the one that introduced new Chess in 1495. He goes so far as to say that if the Montserrat copy had been lost we would have never known the role of this work in the origins of new chess. To conclude he states, "of course if Vicent's book was the basis for the Göttingen problems, then that book cannot be dated prior to 1495, and the problem of dating new Chess would still exist." As we will later see, in our current opinion, it is no longer important to date the manuscripts attributed to Lucena before his printed work. However, we see that Eales is on the right track, taking into account what has been researched and published since then about Vicent's book.

Eales has provided us another, very enlightening fact: the existence of many chess manuscripts (Civis Bononiae family) from the second half of the 15th century, the latest ones being from around 1460, and none of them mention any rule changes, which led Eales to date new chess at around 1470-1490. But, during that period, we only have one text on modern chess, *Scachs d'amor*.. A close reading of this text leads us to not search any further: the poem makes it clear that we have found the place where new chess was created: Valencia.

Unfounded theories that place the origin of modern chess in France or Italy

There has not been a lack of eminent historians, such as Van der Linde himself, who think that modern chess could have originated in France. Murray¹⁴⁴ states it is difficult to choose between France, Italy and

¹⁴⁴ H.J.R.. Murray, A History of Chess. Oxford University Press, New York, 1913. Murray speaks of *Scachs d'amor* in the chapter that addresses the introduction of new chess. The great historian does not have a specific place in mind for the emergence of new chess, but he does have a possible date for the change of rules: 1485. He first discusses a French manuscript that is presumed to be from the end of the 15th century, *Le jeu des Esches de la Dame moralisé*, where a new form of playing is mentioned. This is irrelevant for us, because it probably came 20 years after the Valencian manuscript. He dedicated page 781 to the manuscript *Scachs d'amor* and transcribed the whole match, which no one doubts is the first one that has been found with current rules (any amateur could reproduce the match by only knowing the moves of the pieces). Actually, as we saw earlier, it is the other way around: it is this game that caused the new rules of modern Chess. It underlines the fact that Fenollar was developing and dictating the already reformed Chess rules and that the poem offers us vital information on how Chess was played in those days at the Aragonese Court, mentioning some of Fenollar's technical rules. Murray noted certain things (perhaps being aware of the truth the manuscript entails) but stopped half-way, perhaps because the discovery was recent (reference quoted in Paluzie's Manual, 1912), because of the language barrier, or because the poets who wrote the poem and their milieu were clearly unknown. With this narrow vision it is not surprising that he doesn't make a connection between the manuscript and Vicent's book (the first two stages of modern Chess). In his monumental study, he only slightly mentions Vicent in a footnote and there isn't even a specific entry of the book in the index of names (although it does appear in the section on lost chess books). Murray's study will certainly have to be reconsidered, seeing as his treatment of the first treatise printed in the world, and moreover -now we know it-

Spain. Given the number of documents and ensuing studies that emerged throughout the last century, any reasoning of this nature should be founded on firm proof and documents. We have already seen how weak etymological arguments are when they are used as a the sole basis, their only strength being their own endogamous value. They are relevant, but only as an ancillary or clarifying discipline.

Other arguments in favour of a French origin are even more extravagant¹⁴⁵. Given that chess has always been an illustrious mirror of life, it has been suggested that the grand Lady who inspired the great revolution on the chessboard was Joan of Arc (1412-1431), a statement that has been made without presenting any arguments or technical proof that could justify the maid of Orleans' candidacy.

Compare this reference to Joan of Arc, where the dates do not agree, with the clear evocation of Queen Isabella and the environment of her incipient monarchy, where King Ferdinand's fondness for Chess is well-documented.

the book where modern Chess was introduced, was so degrading! We now understand Ricardo Calvo when he said that a position of intellectual rebellion is necessary regarding an issue as important as this one, regardless of the consequences. Recently, Dr. Thomas Thomsen, President of C.C.I., informed me that, in consideration of Murray's book and all the work put into it, the society of historians had decided to conduct a team-work study to update and complete Murray's work. As we explained privately to Yuri Averbach, whose completely trust, for his honour and his extreme independence as a historian, if the great truth of modern Chess is not apprehended, if we still accept uncertainty and scorn evidence, documents and serious research, none of this will make sense. Or perhaps it will, since truth always follows its own course and, in the end, prevails. Govert Westerveld's current work, in which I'm honoured to collaborate with all my might and determination, is the best guarantee that in the end, justice will be done and reason, common sense and the ideas that our friend Ricardo Calvo fought so hard for, will prevail.

¹⁴⁵ Since the argument is so weak, we will only add here Golombek's opinion in his Chess Encyclopaedia. Harry Golombek (1977), Spanish edition, Barcelona. 1980, p.80: in another later theory, which was even more extravagant, we are assured that the transformation of the piece was caused by the example of Joan of Arc. But, it seems that the explanation which comes closer to the truth is the one that simply states that the transformation was due to the fact that in the medieval court the Queen came to occupy the throne next to the King.

If we admit that the beginning of modern Chess took place in France, that would necessarily imply that the Lucena manuscripts of the 16th century were also French, for which there is absolutely no foundation. At the same time, we would have to change their dates and make them at least 30 years younger, but then some kind of technical, documentary proof would have to be presented.

This subject is too serious to be determined without referring to treatises and other technical documents.

The confusion about Lucena's authorship and even the dating of the Gotinga manuscript (early 16th century) and the Paris/Place manuscript (c.1513) is now considered obsolete.

A well-documented work on the matter, which clears any doubts, was done by Joaquín Pérez de Arriaga¹⁴⁶.

Hoping to bring an end to this issue, which incomprehensibly still comes up from time to time in scholarly circles¹⁴⁷, we would like to add the following:

1. The Gotinga manuscript (beginning of the 16th century) and the Paris/Place manuscript (c. 1513) include problems of Chess taken in their entirety from *Arte de Ajedrez* (1497), by Lucena. 30 and 28 games respectively.
2. These Chess problems were all formulated according to the modern style, which indicates a time frame where the queen's Chess and the old chess did not seem to coexist any longer. The period of coexistence is marked by Damiano's book of 1512.
3. In both texts new opening rules are included and the already existing rules from the printed book are corrected and updated. For example, in the book's second Rule, Lucena offers in one of the variants commentaries that are speckled with errors, one of which even

¹⁴⁶ El incunable de Lucena. *Primer Arte de Ajedrez Moderno*.(Ediciones Polifemo. Madrid, 1997).

¹⁴⁷ Ricardo Calvo told me that in the Conference of Historians in Amsterdam (2002) a colleague of his still suggested that the Lucena manuscripts were written before *Arte de Ajedrez* and that this idea was not poorly received. As I told Ricardo, there is no longer room for such thinking if a serious study, such as the one we are presenting, is conducted about the manuscripts and Lucena's treatise, in connection with his era and the work of Damiano, etc.

omitted a checkmate. In the manuscripts the entire variant, about which the author couldn't have felt very proud, was eliminated.

4. In the Paris/Place manuscript, as Pérez de Arriaga pointed out, an opening that appeared for the first time in of Damiano's book in 1512 is corrected. This led Pérez de Arriaga to believe that the date of the manuscript was around 1515.

5. Of course, in the manuscripts, the book's printing mistakes were corrected. For example, in Lucena's problem I, a black pawn-decise in the outcome-is printed incorrectly and it is corrected in the manuscripts. Another justification for the chronological succession (and the authorship) stems from the fact that the three collections of problems begin with this very problem, indicating Lucena's fascination for it.

6. By studying the three texts as a whole we can see clearly the evolution of the move known as the King's leap. In the manuscripts the most finished leap, the transposition, is the most common. But there is something even more relevant: in the last manuscript, Paris/Place the King is already permitted to jump as a Knight, a move option that would later be favoured by Ruy López (1561).

In light of these arguments, it no longer seems rigorous to alter (for some ulterior motive) the logical succession of these modern chess documents that are all of Spanish origin.

New chess found early acceptance in Italy, where numerous manuscripts from the Bonus Socius family and the later ones of the Civis Bononiae¹⁴⁸ group have been found. This, together with the fervent medieval tradition and practice of chess, has been proposed as an argument to favour Italy as the possible birthplace of modern chess.

We discussed the first dated Italian text of modern chess, the manuscript of the Casanatense Library in Rome (1511), in our book on Vicent's work. Our technical study showed that the copier, Joannes

¹⁴⁸ One of the last ones to appear is dated 1454, the manuscript of the Estense Library in Modena, with 533 games. According to Pérez de Arriaga, Lucena used it in his book.

Chachi must have used Vicent's book as a source, which was the first book on modern chess¹⁴⁹.



Chess historians meeting in the Castle of Kórnik (Poland), 2002, Symposium honoring Von der Lasa. Photo: courtesy of Jurgen Stigter, Amsterdam (Holland). First row: Alessandro Sanvito (Italy), Harald Balló (Germany), Joaquín Pérez de Arriaga (Spain), Nathaniel Divinsky (Canada), Bárbara Holländer (Germany), Hans Holländer (Germany). Second row: Gerhard Josten (Germany), Unknown, Egbert Meissenburg (Germany), Ken Whyld (Great Britain).

I was recently informed in a letter from my friend, the great Italian historian Alessandro Sanvito, that there is an earlier Italian manuscript, preceding Chachi's, with *partiti alla rabiosa* (games in the "rabid" style) that was probably executed at the end of the 15th century. He was referring to the manuscript from the National Library of Florence (which Murray called "It"), with 54 modern chess problems. In a letter

¹⁴⁹ This was the reason it was printed, to give new Chess, which was born and consolidated in Valencia 20 years before, its "statement of origin".

to Sanvito I expressed my doubts¹⁵⁰ about the new dating, seeing as all the great historians, among them his respected maestro the Professor Adriano Chicco¹⁵¹, had always considered this manuscript to be from the beginning of the 16th century.

In our opinion, and with many reservations about the new dating, as it is a very complicated subject, the possible existence of an Italian manuscript from the end of the 15th century with chess alla rabiosa would only indicate that new chess spread to Italy very quickly. But there would have to be very solid proof to maintain that it was before the publication of the treatises (1495), since this contradicts the very nature of printing: its ability to spread knowledge without impediments or frontiers. The arrival of the treatises by Vicent (1495) and Lucena (1497) must have been what promoted new chess in Italy.

¹⁵⁰ But I especially pointed to him the heart of the matter: in the poem there are numerous references to the rule changes, indicating that it is this school-the Valencian one-that is proposing the Queen's new move options. In my opinion, the fact that it is they themselves who are introducing this new piece, is more important than the date (c. 1474), because it indicates that we need look no further. Lucena's book, on the other hand, does not clarify the origins at all.

¹⁵¹ Adriano Chicco and Antonio Rosino. *Storia degli scacchi in Italia*. Marsilio Editori. Venice, 1990, p. 41.

CONCLUSION:

As we have seen, the precise dating of the manuscript *Scachs d'amor* not only allows us to know the date when the first game was played with our current rules, but also, and even more importantly, it allows us to specify the moment (and place) when modern chess emerged, when the powerful Queen was created.

These two finds come from the poem, which is therefore a point of departure for any study on the origin of modern chess. By virtue of the evidence we have presented, we think the most probable date for the poem is 1475, at the latest 1476. This gives us the date of the poem as well as the date of the birth of modern chess in Valencia, since the poem reiterates again and again the innovations and insists that the new form is new, brand-new.

Ricardo Calvo dated the manuscript in the period 1470-1490, and although this was more precise than the vague generalised date—"end of the 15th century"—it is insufficient to us today, because we are looking for nothing less than the origin of modern chess.

We are amazed at the fact that a scholar such as historian Von der Lasa thought that the date was 1475 and gave primacy to Spain. He based his ideas on his knowledge of the History of Chess, on the bibliography, but especially after having personally completed a serious study on Lucena's work in 1859. This book in itself already suggests that modern chess had been played in Spain for 20 years. That is why he earnestly sought the book by Vicent, printed in Valencia in 1495, that could clarify all of this. It is a shame that he did not know of the key manuscript, also from Valencia, which was discovered after his death.

Von der Lasa was right. The text that proves it, the missing coordinate in his chart of modern Chess, is the manuscript *Scachs d'amor*.

Technical dating

In *Scachs d'amor* we find the first game played according to the rules of modern Chess. In fact, Fenollar's interventions as referee, as we have shown, fully transmit the revolutionary proposal that the Valencian poets were advocating.

These rules, especially the allusions to the new Queen or Dama, had just appeared on the chessboard. The poem itself is the official document that ratifies it.

- Stanza I: "Mars devised a game of chess such as had never been seen before: Taking Reason for King without pre-eminence and Will for a Queen of great power"

- Stanza 54: "I say that the Queen shall have the moves of all the pieces save the Knight. But our game still wants to adorn itself with a new and surprising style (...) for, mainly, the Queen's dignity is enhanced, as she is given the sword, the sceptre and the throne."

Stanza 60: "Since, according to our style, all the power of the loving Kings is transferred to the beloved Queens. So, the rules of our school properly state that the Queen must never be left alone."

In all of these stanzas where the new piece's movements are described, there are explicit references to its creation, to the innovation it implies, and to the incontestable fact that it was them, Fenollar, Vinyoles and Castellví, who were proposing the new way of playing. We can sense in the poem that, although the authors are aware of the importance of new piece, they still have not fully understood the extent of her power. This is understandable, since she was a new creation. But it did not prevent them from making a proud display of the Lady or giving her the leading role in the match and in checkmate. At the same time, they also had the foresight to establish the King's leap in order to reduce the Queen's devastating powers. As we saw, this move option was also experiencing an evolutionary phase, at least two stages before Lucena's description.

Lucena's problem 103, which we discussed above, solves these two issues (the enormous power of the queen is now limited, and she can be sacrificed in favour of attaining the supreme objective of the

checkmate; the black king is protected by his lateral pawns showing that the King's leap, known as transposition, has been used). This chess problem shows the technical and practical evolution that had occurred between the texts, which would be difficult to acquire in less than 20 years.

The preference shown in the poem for the term *Dama* is highly noticeable. However, in the stanzas where the new piece appears and her new power is described, they break drastically away from this practice and unhesitatingly show preference for the word *Queen*. This is because the chessboard seems to reflect the real events taking place at the Spanish Court. When the new piece's power is spoken of, there is no doubt about calling her *Queen*. It is extremely surprising that the *Queen* was born with even more power (A *Queen* of great power, they say) than she has today. The two supreme privileges of the *King* (a *King* without pre-eminence) were extended to her: her capture meant defeat and it was impossible for the *Queens* to engage with one another (something similar to the *Bare King* rule of the Arabs). At the time, we interpreted these norms as specifications implemented during a period of transition, as a measure to establish the new chess. However, today we think that they were the actual rules¹⁵² devised at the moment when new Chess was founded in Valencia. These rules, perhaps not very coherent for a Chess game, or rather, not very practical, had their explanation, especially if we become aware of their source of inspiration. Govert Westerveld's idea, conceived thanks to his knowledge of the History of Spain and his vast erudition regarding board games, ascribes the important role of the powerful, inspirational woman of this process to *Queen Isabella of Castile* and the environment of the Spanish monarchy. This idea shines irresistibly in

¹⁵² This does not lessen the poem's value as the first description of modern Chess rules. What it does ratify is precisely the blossoming of modern chess. Everything is new. If long years of practice had existed, the all-powerful *Queen* would have already lost some of her power (actually, the two regal prerogatives extended to the *Queen* lessened the game's vigour and impaired its coherence). Here it is majestically presented, exactly as it was created. In Vicent's 1495 book, the queen's Chess had certainly already been refined, through practice.

light of the following historical facts, which are reflected, and often very explicitly, in the poem:

Historical dates

1. Queen Isabella is crowned 13 December 1474 (Stanza 54)

2. Concord of Segovia, 15 January 1475. The monarchs form an inseparable unit, awarding each other equal powers (*tanto monta, monta tanto, Isabel como Fernando*). Stanza I, Stanzas 60 and 63.

3. War with Portugal. On 28 April 1475 Queen Isabella, as Ferdinand's equal, grants her husband absolute power. Battle of Toro, 1 March 1476, which led to the defeat of the Portuguese.

These dates allow us to work on the poem's genesis. Luckily, the first poetic collaboration¹⁵³ of the three friends is documented, on the occasion of the literary competition in honour of the Virgin Mary in 1474. Among Fenollar's literary circle, these three poets were probably the most enthusiastic about Chess. Maybe their youthful spirit -creative, dreamy, innovative- had already made them experiment with the idea of reforming the game. The events of 1475 (and December 1474) appear explicitly in the poem with astounding clarity. The firm Victory over the Portuguese guaranteed the political future of the monarchy, which could have given the poets the necessary confidence. Verifiable events from real life in 1475 are reflected in the poem. In fact, knowing that the real-life model was imported into the chessboard sheds light on some passages that were technically confusing.

The first document on modern Chess in the world therefore confirms the ideas of Westerveld, Calvo and myself. Because, clearly, Govert Westerveld's ideas can not be refuted arguing disbelief in a Queen or a

¹⁵³ There is a third collaboration of the three poets, *Las endeuinallas* ('the riddles'), but the date is also unknown. See: Antoni Ferrando. *Narcís Vinyoles i la seua obra*. Universitat de Valencia, Facultat de Filologia. Valencia. 1978. *Las endeuinallas* were later published in a second edition of the *Cancionero General* (Valencia, 1514), which once again show the poetic skill of the three friends, but above all the camaraderie and great understanding between them.

powerful woman as a motivation or incentive for this great revolution. Govert Westerveld gives greater depth to the research. He too asks himself -and researches- where (Spain, Valencia), and how (the first documents on Chess and draughts, which are all Valencian, and their relationship to their derivatives) this great revolution, which has illuminated us to this day, took place. Furthermore, he wants to know why (Queen Isabella, the important events happening in Spain, the printing press, the conquest of the New World, the expulsion of the Jews).

Therefore, whoever would like to refute Westerveld's serious research must be prepared to do it three times: regarding the questions of where, how and why.

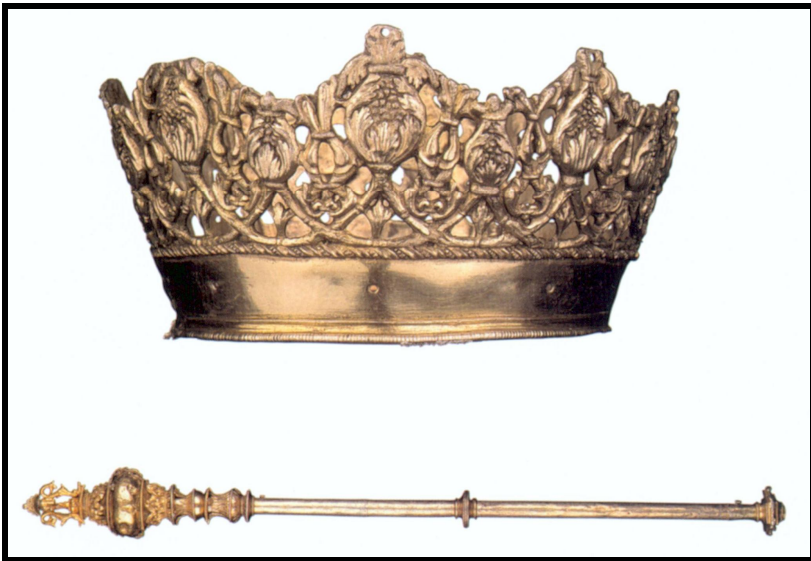
An important quality of researchers, and even historians, is humility. Recognising when we have made a mistake -we all do it- and incorporating the truths that others have shown us, the fruit of their effort, sweat, sacrifice and dedication, are the least we can do to repay these few tenacious and free historians who fight for the truth, with more determination when truth is concealed or disfigured time and again, even intentionally.

Therefore, we must grant Scachs d'amor the merit it deserves: it is the text that definitively clears up the questions about the birth of modern Chess. The manuscript is lost today, but it emerged miraculously in 1905 to show us the truth. To keep denying this truth would be as if it had never appeared. The other truths derive from this one.

The truth is that the text where modern Chess is established clearly points to the new Spanish monarchy and to the years 1475-1476. It is based on a beautiful Queen, with a warrior's courage and an iron will, but especially, with immense power.



**The sword of Isabella I of Castile, a determining factor- for solving the poem.
Courtesy of the company Swords from Toledo –
experts in ancient swords (www.swordsfromtoledo.com)**



Crown and Scepter of Isabella I of Castile (Capilla Real de Granada)

CHAPTER 23

The book of Francesch Vicent

The fundamental concepts and principles of science
are free inventions of the human spirit.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Until 2001 historians did not know more than the technical specifications of the first chess book ever printed in the world of which the author was Francesch Vicent, born in the city of Sergobe. He wrote a book about chess with 100 problems. It was adapted to the Valencian language in the city of Valencia in 1495.

Of this lost¹⁵⁴ book only few texts were known and the occasional speculation more or less founded. Once and again different authors and bibliographers quote the reference to the book taken from the *Tipografía* by Méndez¹⁵⁵ where the full title¹⁵⁶ and the rest of the information about the edition appears. The review, although insufficient because of the relevance of the topic, is impeccable since it informs us of the full title of the book and the name, place of birth, and residency of the author, the theme and a key sketch of its content (it

¹⁵⁴ There was a copy in the Comunale of Siena library according to some writers. On the other hand, the German historian Von der Lasa concluded in 1897 that "Vicent" was bound with another book. We therefore cannot exclude that something strange happened to the work and that a copy is in the hands of a collector.

¹⁵⁵ **MÉNDEZ, FRANCISCO** (1861) *Tipografía Española o Historia de la introducción, propagación y progreso del Arte de la Imprenta en España*. Book I, p. 83 Madrid. Quoted by José Antonio Garzón Roger (2001) *En Pos del Incunable perdido Francesch Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partits dels schachs, Valencia, 1495* p. 22 Valencia; and it quotes the same author that the 2nd edition edited and added by Dionisio Hidalgo can be consulted, page 42 Madrid 1861. The first book of Méndez piece would be finished in 1793, the same year as the piece of Caballero was edited.

¹⁵⁶ It is also given in German Georg W. Panzer (*Annales typographici*, vol III. p 60. Nüremberg 1796). Must have taken the reference from Caballero or Méndez.

has 100 problems), the language in which it was written (Valencian), some technical characteristics (gothic letter, in 4º), the name of the publishing house, day, place, and year of publishing. So the news arrived to Father Ribas, the archivist of Montserrat, as well as to the scholar Father Jaume Caresmar: This is the data sheet of the book, so many times repeated:

Libre dels jochs partitis del Scachs en nombre de 100 ordenat e compost per mi Francesh Vicent, nat en la ciutat de Segorbe, criat e vehí de la insigne e valeroso ciutat de Valencia.

It ends:

A loor e gloria de nostre Redentor Jesu Christ fou acabat lo dit libre dels jochs partitis dels scachs en la sinsigne ciutat de Valencia e estamat per mans de Lope de Roca Alemany e Pere Trinchet librere á XV días de Maig del any MCCCCLXXXV.

Coeval to the piece of Méndez is the one of Father Diosdado Caballero¹⁵⁷ who claims that his source was Father Ribas, who must have sent an identical data sheet to both authors. What is truly remarkable, as noted by Garzón, is that the copy was found with certainty in Montserrat in 1793.

In the last 3 centuries the historian repeated the thing (copy of Montserrat, burnt by the French, reference of Méndez, etc.). This provoked many bibliographers to express doubts about its existence. Because of that Dr. Chicco¹⁵⁸ and Dr. Ricardo Calvo¹⁵⁹, sometimes

¹⁵⁷ **DIOSDADO CABALLERO, RAYMUNDO** (1793) *De Prima Typographiae Hispaniae*. Pg. 83. The Spanish version by D. Vicente Fontán can be consulted, Madrid 1865, p. 93, as seen by José Antonio Garzon Roger (2001). En Pos del Incunable perdido Francesh Vicent: *Llibre dels jochs partitis dels schachs*, Valencia 1495 p. 21 Valencia.

¹⁵⁸ **CHICCO, ADRIANO** (1992) *Un incunable fantasma sobre el juego del Ajedrez*. Esopo: Revista Trimestral de Bibliofilia, nº 5, julio de 1992, págs. 29 a 35. (This

tinged with despair even though we understand it, looked for signs of the book in Italy, which at least partially have been called into question. However, this is not relevant anymore, since fortunately there was a complete change in this labyrinth of confusion due to the tenacity of one person related to the historical research of chess. Now, thanks to the in depth investigation of Valencian, José Antonio Garzón Roger, the checkers world as well as the chess world can give congratulations. His book is the work of 10 years, looking for clues about Francesh Vicent and the proofs he found are conclusive:



Dr. Adriano Chicco in 1948 (Kindness of Chess Magazine)

article ends with remembering that the first book about checkers was published in Valencia).

¹⁵⁹ Panzer's reference mentioned on the first page of this chapter came from Dr. Ricardo Calvo in one of his many publications. It's very likely that Ricardo Calvo took it from professor Chicco, from the interesting article we have referred to in the previous note and the title of which evidenced the few data we had until recently about Vicent's book, and the desperation that produced.

The book was printed without a doubt, it was a modern¹⁶⁰ chess manual and a copy of it must still exist in the world. As Garzón claims, once the content of the book was safe the time for the actual book had come to the continent. Then we'll see that the possibilities of a copy appearing are plenty.

Not only our historian Garzón was there, with his endeavour of clearing up the existence of Vicent's book. More than one wanted to know the real content of that book. But perhaps the fact that the book of Vincent was no longer found and that in contrast Lucena's was could have been the cause of the chess player Averbach¹⁶¹ coming up in 1985 with an interesting theory we briefly describe next¹⁶²:

Vicent: 100 problems, of them 96 would be in Lucena: of the 150 that appear in Lucena 50 would have to be taken out (from 18 to 67) which come from the same manuscript and the problems 101-102 and 145-146, that were dropped (very messy) in Lucena's book.

Damiano: 72 problems, of them 70 would be in Lucena and problems 9 and 20 of Damiano would appear in Vicent's book. The 72 problems of Damiano appeared in Vicent's book.

¹⁶⁰ Garzón gives evidence of different nature, the most important one of technical qualities. Manages to demonstrate that the MS of the Casanatense Library of Rome dated 1511, which already has modern chess problems (*alla rabiosa*) must have been based on Vicent's book. About this MS Garzón talks in detail in the chapter dedicated to the book of Timoneda.

¹⁶¹ **AVERBACH, YURI** (1985) "Zagadka utracennoy knigi" en Nauka i Zizn. Moscú 1985. N. 8. pp. 137-141. Translated as "The Mystery of the Lost Book" en IFK (Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften). Ed. E. Strouhal. Viena 1995. p. 117 ss.)

¹⁶² **AVERBACH, YURI** (1994) *El misterio del libro perdido*. In: Revista Internacional de Ajedrez (febrero de 1993 y marzo 1994). Quoted by José Antonio Garzón Roger (2001). In: *Pos del Incunable perdido Francesh Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partitis dels schachs, Valencia, 1495* p. 116 Valencia.

Those occurrences are similar to the ones that happened to me when I presented my hypothesis¹⁶³ that Timoneda's book of 1635 was in fact a piece by the poet and bookseller Juan de Timoneda around 1550 would also befall on the great chess player Yuri Averbach. In my case the great historian Karel Wendel Kruijswijk¹⁶⁴ was trying to rebut my 12 arguments one by one in a magnificent way of which many a lawyer would have been jealous, and in Yuri Averbakh's case it was the Spaniard Pérez de Arriaga. Surely in both cases it was about a historian feeling stepped on in his field, losing that way without realizing, at times the logic reasoning of backing each other up in the search of truth.



Yuri Averbakh

Curiously in his own study Pérez de Arriaga¹⁶⁵, fierce critic of Averbach, validated Averbakh's ideas (without realizing it) when he demonstrated that in Lucena's book there were two moments of different editorial houses and for some reason at the end the **old 50**

¹⁶³ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1989) Juan de Timoneda (I), in *Het Nieuwe Damspel* 1989-2 Utrecht, pp. 46-47;

WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1990) Juan de Timoneda (II), in *Het Nieuwe Damspel* 1990-2 Utrecht, p. 40

WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1991) Juan de Timoneda (III), in *Het Nieuwe Damspel* 1991-3 Utrecht, p. 67

¹⁶⁴ **KRUIJSWIJK, KAREL WENDEL** (1989) Libro llamado ingenio, el qual trata del juego del marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda, Tolosa (Francia) 1635. Historical review by Kruijswijk. Edited by L'Esprit, Rosmalen, pp. 106-109

¹⁶⁵ In his work *El incunable de Lucena. Primer Arte de Ajedrez Moderno* (Ediciones Polifemo, Madrid, 1997)

problems were there (all known) with which Lucena’s collection partially concealed its origin.

Averbach’s¹⁶⁶ Thesis: Lucena and Damiano, tributary to Vicent

| Lucena (150 problems) Book 1497 | Damiano (72 problems) Book 1512 | Vicent (100 problems) Book 1495 |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| 18-67 come from the same manuscript, Modena’s 50 | | |
| 101-102 2 | | 101-102 Lucena’s 2 |
| 145-146 2 | | |
| Remainder 96 | 70 copied out of 96 Lucena’s problems 70 | Remainder 96 of Lucena 96 |
| | Problems 9 and 20 2 | Damiano 9 and 20 2 |
| 150 | 72 | 100 |

Chart composed with the help of José Antonio Garzón Roger’s¹⁶⁷ book

None of these problems appear in Damiano’s piece and many can be played in a modern style. It’s incomprehensible that Damiano did not include any of these problems. This already called Averbach’s attention, but the reason is very simple: Damiano did not see any of these problems, since the book he was inspired by had 100 problems and none of these appeared in them: it was Vicent’s book.

¹⁶⁶ Believe it or not, a century before Averbach the link between Lucena’s book and Vicent’s had already been suggested. The following reference was given to José A. Garzón by his friend bibliographer and researcher of chess from Tarragona Josep Alió: AMERICAN CHESS MAGAZINE

Part IV - Vol. I, issue 7, December 1897. L.D.B. Jr. A scholar publishes an article serialized, documenting in the extraordinary library of Charles A. Gilbert where the link between the book of Lucena with Vicent’s is stated: (page 400) ”It is probable that the 150 games of Lucena contained most, if not all, of Vicent’s problems”.

¹⁶⁷ **GARZON ROGER, JOSÉ ANTONIO** (2001) En Pos del Incunable perdido Francesh Vicent: Llibre dels jochs partitis dels schachs, Valencia, 1495 págs. 113-121 Valencia. Averbach does not include problems 101 and 102 of Lucena and therefore only has 98 problems. The important thing is that Vicent’s book starts to emerge.

After the publication of José Antonio Garzón's book the chess world could finally move in the field of concrete facts¹⁶⁸.

The editing and certain existence of Vicent's book in the beginning of the XIX century can no longer be questioned. Those doubts that sometimes have gathered reputable biographers are now rancid, lax, and fraudulent, under the following documents and proofs:

1. A trading of 30 copies¹⁶⁹ in 1496, and also in charge of one of the publishers, Pedro Trincer.

¹⁶⁸ It's worthwhile to remember here the appearance in the last years of biographic data related to Vicent. Segorbino's tenacious and rigorous researcher Rafa Martín found in 1998 a MS which shows that Vicent was *Justicia* in Segorbe in 1500. The good news continues. Our friend the great Italian historian Alessandro Sanvito published an interesting article (*L'Italia Scacchistica*, nº 1131, December 1999, pages. 392 and 393) following the discovery of a document preserved in the Archives of Módena, belonging to the *Memoriale di Lucrezia Borgia* (1506) where it is mentioned that the daughter of Alejandro VI had a chess teacher: "*Maestro Francesco Spagnolo maestro di scachi*", who perceived a monthly salary of "3 lire marchesane". In personal communication Sanvito confirms his belief that it cannot be anyone other than Francesch Vicent, Valencian like Borgia. But Sanvito shows another possibility, less firm, yet probable - that the very Vicent was the author of the chess codex of Perugia and Cesena (both of early XVI century and according to Sanvito, previous to the MS, referring to Lucrecia Borgia). The same man hand wrote both codices and there are a lot of similar terms in them. Taking into account the presence of Vicent in Ferrara to employment under Lucrezia Borgia that takes it to suggesting to Sanvito that the Segorbino Vicent was the compiler of both texts. The big picture changes substantially. Everything points to the belief that Vicent moved to Italy at the beginning of the XVI century. Which part did Francesch Vicent personally play in the introduction of modern chess to Italy?

¹⁶⁹ **PHILIPPE BERGER:** *Libro y Lectura en la Valencia del Renacimiento*. Edicions Alfons el Magnànim. Institució Valenciana d'Estudis i Investigació, Valencia, 1987. Professor Berger publishes for the first time the important document. José A. Garzón has recently published the final interpretation of the document: *Boletín de CAPEA*, año 18-19, nº 60-61 (Diciembre de 2002, abril 2003) Alemania-España. In the trade Vicent's book is named explicitly *jochs descachs*, in 1496 and the salesman was Pedro Trincer!. If let's say 30 books were sold in 1496, that makes us think the die [or dice?] roll was not so short.

2. A **precise mention** (the first) in **1783** in a letter that Josep Vega sent on 15 November to Juan A. Mayans¹⁷⁰ to whom he sent a completely filled data sheet of the book and claimed that Montserrat existed.

3. A **MS of Vargas Ponce**¹⁷¹, an educated man and friend of Goya and Jovellanos who visited the Monastery in **1799**, clearly mentions 11 incunables, among them Vicent's. This MS remained unpublished until recently.

4. **The modern trading** of a book (perhaps in **1913**). The book was sold by the librarian from Barcelona Salvador Babra to an American (the main candidate is J.G. White from Cleveland). José A. Garzón gives in his book the keys to follow his clues to this sale, but he took matters into his hands, visiting the family of the people alluded to in

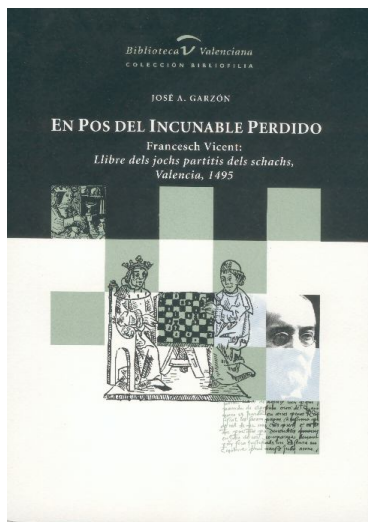
¹⁷⁰ **MAYANS Y SISCAR, GREGORIO** (2000) Epistolario XVII, edición de Amparo Alemany, Artes Gráficas Soler, Valencia. Págs. 460-461. Quoted by José Antonio Garzón Roger (2001). After the Incunable of Francesh Vicent: *Llibre dels jochs partitis dels schachs*, Valencia, 1495 page 101. We quote the fundamental part of this letter:

Vega Sentmenat a J. A. Mayans, 15 de noviembre de 1783

My lord and master. The silence of your lordship speaks to me. I mention this over the election of a Penitentiary. Only wishing it becomes, as we destined it to be, and God will provide on the other hand. The news of Gerónima is news to be and may as well be to your lordship the news that in between portraits of monks there is also one of P. Bala. The monastery of Vall de Ebrón is in the middle of the mountains and forms a pleasant view, elegantly writes to you the taymado P. Caymo Norberto, known as *il vago italiano*. There's a very small library. **Even if it's not in mine it is found in Montserrat a book in 4º intitulado *Llibre dels jochs partitis de Schachs en nombre de lo ordenat e compost per mí Francesch Vicent nat en la Ciutat de Segorb i criat e vehí de la insigne e valerosa Ciutat de Valencia estampat per Lope de la Roca Alemany en Pere Trinchet en Valencia 1495* que por todas sus circunstancias es apreciable**, I have it dated along with 100 other books of the same antiquity that those Fathers forwarded me that now, I believe, have formed and ordained their library.

¹⁷¹ **BARAUT, CEBRIÀ** (1799) Viatge de Josep Vargas Ponce a Montserrat l'any 1799, *Miscellania Barcinonensia* 7 (núm. XVIII), 1968, págs. 7-37. Quoted by José Antonio Garzón Roger (2001). En Pos del Incunable perdido Francesh Vicent: *Llibre dels jochs partitis dels schachs*, Valencia, 1495. pág. 98. Valencia.

the trade and analyzing meticulously the environment of it, and today, as he confessed, he can guarantee that the sale happened and a copy of Vicent's book still exists among us. Our friend has had the deference of telling us some of the progress to the investigation as well as a brief synopsis of it.



Cover of the book by researcher **José A. Garzón** that we have referred to on numerous occasions. After publishing of this extensive research work of a decade the book of Vicent is recovering its greatness: it was not just **the first treaty of chess published worldwide, it also spurred a great chess revolution which had been gestated in Valencia 20 years before.** With Garzón's work comes (this time firm) hope that a copy of such important piece can appear.

The copy of *Vicent* sold in Barcelona in 1913

Over to **José A. Garzón:**

PALAU AND BABRA - TWO LIBRARIANS AND THE DESTINY OF A BOOK

For a long time it was thought that the possibilities of a copy of Vicent's book appearing were scarce, almost nonexistent, since the last known and perfectly documented copy had succumbed to the fire of the Montserrat Abbey in 1811 provoked by the attack of Napoleon's troops.

However, unremitting men, reputable chess players and bibliographers who were aware of the importance of the treaty died without anyone being able to clip their hope of finding Vicent's book. Among them

the Spaniards **José Paluzié** and **Dr. Tolosa y Carreras** who even exceeded the Spanish in their enthusiasm, the prominent historian, great chess player and bibliographer **Tassilo von der Lasa** are worth mentioning. While they lived the flame of hope was always alive. They passed their enthusiasm to each other. Tolosa y Carreras came to suggest the endowment of an award to the government¹⁷². Among those who knew the history it could not be any other way; there was a good friend of theirs - the known librarian Antonio Palau, author of the true piece of reference for bibliographers and researchers: *Manual del Librero Hispanoamericano*.



José Antonio Garzón Roger

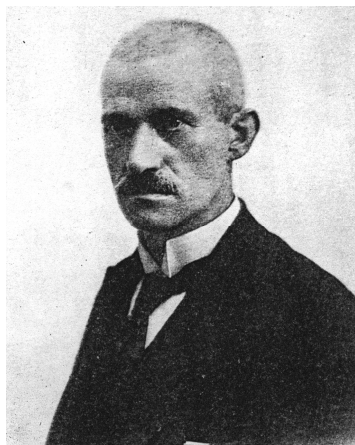
Already by the first edition of the *Manual de Ajedrez (1923-1927)* Palau picked up the legend amongst the librarians of Barcelona that one of them had sold a copy to the United States, Palau unable to confirm the news. Then

¹⁷² Revista Ruy López. *Bibliografía*. Tomo IV, abril de 1899 págs. 103-105. Tolosa y Carreras has that idea of reading a letter that shows his friend José Pin y Soler from his correspondence with D. Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, then chief of the Cuerpo de Bibliotecarios-Archiveros of Spain. In the letter the great Menéndez Pelayo shows his pretty involvement in the History: “...I have also never seen the book by Francesh Vicent, nor do I know of anyone who has”.

he formulated the question “Does this book exist nowadays? Whoever knows, answer the question.”

But by pirouettes of fate he would answer the question himself 20 years later. Already at the 2nd edition of his legendary work that his son finalized Agustín¹⁷³ showed some new data mentioning the search performed by Ventura Sureda in USA.

However, we were able to prove once we located it, with difficulty of Ventura Sureda¹⁷⁴ it came propelled by who was already performing the old librarian Antonio Palau from a while back. Did Palau know something new - had he found a new clue?



Antonio Palau y Dulcet (1860-1938)

His seriousness, reputation, and unmatched love for the book offer us an absolute guarantee of the sale (1913) of a copy of Vicent's book.

(Kindness of José A. Garzón Roger)

¹⁷³ This 2nd edition, Barcelona-Oxford (1948-1976) is a true bibliographic monument since it is composed of 27 books.

¹⁷⁴ Joan Ventura Sureda, *A la recerca d'un llibre escapadís*. Ressorgiment, maig de 1953, n°442. Buenos Aires. Ventura Sureda fulfilled with care the commission from Palau doing multiple consultations to the main American libraries and private collectors. Unsuccessfully.

I knew thanks to the kindness of **M^a Cruz Cabeza**, headmistress of the Historical Library of the University of Valencia, that Palau y Dulcet had once again referred to the enigmatic episode of Barcelona in one of his very esteemed pieces, even thought today it's very difficult to reach: *Memorias de un librero catalán*¹⁷⁵ (1867-1935), here Palau reveals the name of the librarian to us:

“From 1897 to 1915 Babra surrounded himself with a mysterious halo. Of course; on his floor in the street of Méndez Núñez, where he appeared more as buyer than seller (...). The first time he came to see me at Buensuceso he only told me: “When a good piece falls into your hand, run to offer it to the entire world, and if you're not successful, come to me. I pay more than anyone”. And when he reached this success, everybody trusted his word of paying well, and that's how he got good books at a low price. I repeat he used his genius to throw people off, surrounding his actions of a disturbing mystery.

Babra boasted about having had in his possession the rarest books. If you were to ask him for this or that one, he'd answer “I had it, I sold it to a client in Germany”. He claimed to know everything, and no matter what question you asked, you could not catch him unaware (...)

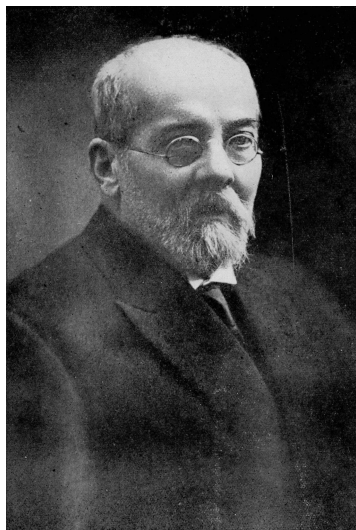
A friend of mine finding himself on the floor of Babra he noticed a package ready for mailing. “There goes the Jocs partits dels schachs, by Vicent, Valencia edition, 1495, 4º” Who was it addressed to?” asked his friend. “The name I cannot tell. He's a rich client from North America”.

In his book Palau continues referencing episodes that confirm the mystery of **Babra**, but also his control over the profession, which took him to get the rarest and most unique pieces.

Therefore we see that Palau in 1935 already possessed information much more precise of where his *Manual* was. He did not reveal who his friend was. But he would do years later in a letter he wrote to **Ventura Sureda** and published true to the original manuscript.

¹⁷⁵ Fue publicado por Librería Catalon*ia, Barcelona, 1935.

Palau was then 85 years old (1952) and must have been aware that he was the only person in the world looking for Vicent according to the literal text¹⁷⁶ of the letter sent to Ventura Sureda:



José Paluzie y Lucena (1860-1938)

Magnificent didactitian and harbinger of the study of history and bibliography of Spanish chess.

(Kindness of José A. Garzón Roger)

*“My ill-fated friend **Josep Paluzie i Lucena** spent his entire life writing letters, urbo et orbi, to find some copy of Vicent, but he died without getting it. I’ve come to know what I will tell **from J.Pin i Soler i P. Font de Rubinat**, both dead, who had in their hands a copy of the book in question. The story of the facts is as follows: In the beginning of this century the librarian from Barcelona Salvador Babra has a copy that, as I’ve said, was in the hands of Pin i Soler i Font of Rubinat. Babra offered it to a collector from the United States who asked him to send it. Babra answered that if he wanted it, he’d have to pick it up himself, mediating the value. Thereupon the buyer embarked in a yacht up to Barcelona, paid the value of the book, and set sail. About forty years have gone by and nothing more has been found of the American or the book.”*

¹⁷⁶ We have translated it from the original Catalan version.

Overwhelming letter that gives a turning point to the issue, and that each time I read it I shudder. The honesty of the source proves true, Antonio Palau, who also told the story in first person, bestowed absolute authenticity to the story, which cannot be questioned.



**José Pin i Soler (1842-1929) had the privilege of having in his hands Vicent's book for which he had longed so much.
(Kindness of José A. Garzón Roger)**

Here we already have all the characters except the mysterious American who comes in a yacht. However, the way of reporting it by Palau is very strange. All his friends already died - a fact that reiterates and channels the story through a vehicle, the private letter which in the beginning should not have left any trail. As we said in our book, it's an authentic story that for whatever reason hides something. All the participants in the trade are friends¹⁷⁷ and very prestigious people.

¹⁷⁷ Font de Rubinat and Babra had projects in common. The friendship between Pin i Soler and Font de Rubinat was very intense. When we visited his grandchildren in Reus in April 2002 in company of my friend Josep Alió, Joaquín Blasco and Font de Rubiant already told us that his grandfather always had a table prepared with a board for visitors of Pin y Soler. Palau states in his *Memorias* that in Babra's library during

Pablo Font de Rubinat (1860-1948) after dedicating his life to the public definitely devoted himself to the great bibliographic¹⁷⁸ profession. **José Pin y Soler** (1842-1929) was a famous Catalan writer, chess amateur, a field in which he has left us an important piece¹⁷⁹ for Spanish bibliography.



**The historian and bibliographer from Tarragona Josep Alió
(Kindness of José A. Garzón Roger)**

The extravagant tone of the narrative described in the manuscript text of Palau is the allusion to an American who arrives in a yacht and sets sail. As the Valencian writer and bibliographer Rafael Solaz says, *a long voyage to pick up a small book of barely 20cm*. For we saw, along Ricardo Calvo, that **John Griswold White** was pointed at (1845-1928), after all his other passion along chess was sailing, not for nothing was he a founding partner of the *Cheveland Yacht Club*. **The picturesque note becomes a definite proof**. White was the biggest owner of books about chess of the time; it seems that by his death he

his last years one could often find José Pin i Soler and other bibliophiles taken in by the game of chess. The fact that the 3 witnesses were trusted people and friends of Palau was an additional guarantee supporting the truthfulness of this fantastic story.

¹⁷⁸ He managed to gather 45,000 volumes with a hundred incunables, some of them unique items.

¹⁷⁹ *Problemes d'escachs d'autors catalans contemporanis*, Barcelona, 1899. In it he speaks at length of Vicent's book, trapping like few were able to his greatness: he manages to say about him: that it was the first time a book was written with problems and diagrams and talking exclusively of battles and strategies of chess. Later fate wanted the book he thought lost, with deep sadness, come to be in his hands. What powerful reason made them keep the story quiet?

had gathered around 13,000 books about chess and checkers. This passed on to the *Cleveland Public Library*, a true sanctuary of the chess culture, where Vicent's book is not officially situated.

We were convinced, as was Palau, of the veracity of the story, but we invested too much time in consultations and trips to be able to give an absolute guarantee of its authenticity. It's something that today we can claim forthright. A copy of Vicent's book remains amongst us. Now any effort we make to find it will be worth it. That's why we here, looking for new researchers¹⁸⁰ who can help us, place all we have into this. We keep nothing, not even the illusion of the finding, we also share. Above all, it can be said that along with the aura of mystery and legend that Babra fashioned around himself he also acquired a deserved reputation of severity despite being implied in most trading episodes of books in his time related to unique items. But in all cases we've been able to study we've been able to prove the authenticity of the story¹⁸¹ and with a happy ending.

¹⁸⁰ Here I want to remember the German researcher **Manfred Eder** who for many years has been following any clue related to the book of our sleeplessness. He believes the copy of Montserrat never vanished since French soldiers provoked fires after having ransacked the premises. Eder handles search criteria that remind us of Von der Lasa. With people like him we are on the right path.

¹⁸¹ We'll establish two clarifying examples, both extracted from José Ribelles Comín's *Bibliografía de la Lengua Valenciana*. Madrid, 1915. When the second edition of Martorell's novel was assumed lost, *Tirant lo Blanc*, Barcelona edition, and the loss of the copy that existed in the library was cried inconsolably. Municipal de Oporto, still in 1860, Ribelles Comín guaranteed that his friend the librarian Salvador Babra had sold a copy of this edition to the United States for the respectable sum of 38,000 francs. But Babra did not reveal the identity of the owner of the unique copy. Babra's absolute discretion in his transactions makes for the secret of his success.

Another episode no less disturbing is the one related to the famous two pages of the *Biblia Valenciana* attributed to Bonifacio Ferrer (Valencia, 1477-78). After narrating the adventures of the MS where they were inserted, with moments when they find themselves in an unknown place, it comes to show –and as a public demonstration the two pages - that they are found at that moment in the hands of Salvador Babra. Nowadays they are kept in the Library of The Hispanic Society of New York. Babra, as we see, does not spare means to style himself his disquieting fame, but he knows that the first premise is the truth. Later we will give more proof that the episode of

We are about to believe that Babra never revealed the exact data to Palau. However, he cannot have deprive his two friends Pin i Soler y Font de Rubiant of the vision of a book of which he'd heard so much about. Besides, they were the ideal trustees of the act, one an expert bibliophile who possesses numerous Catalan incunables, the other a famous author and reputable expert in chess topics and obsessed with the matter of Vicent's book. He knew his friends would keep the secret, even about a topic like this. The buyer must ask for the guarantee of silence. This could also be promoted by the doubtful provenance of the copy. We have already seen our book that is very likely the same book of Montserrat¹⁸², so at that moment and with the expectation of him in Barcelona the sale was clandestine.



**Pablo Font de Rubinat (1860 – 1948). The last person who saw Vicent's book
(Kindness of José A. Garzón Roger)**

Vicent's book, that does not fit the saga of the previous ones, is also widely confirmed.

¹⁸² Salvador Juanpere in his piece *Scachs d'amor. Narcís Vinyoles*. Interserveis Empordà. Figueres 1992, presents the possibility that the copy of Montserrat could've been changed at one moment for another incunable. This possibility could explain a lot.

For us it was fundamental to be able to relate J.G. White with a more tangible proof to the described episode. Luckily it was possible to do.

The key character according to our investigation is **Karl Wilhelm Hiersemann**, librarian-antiquarian of Leipzig, who was an expert in Spanish and Portuguese books. There are several cases accredited to trading of unique or extremely rare items by him. J.G. White was one of the main clients in America.

Both sponsor the complete reproduction in 1913 of the codex of Alfonso X *El Sabio* about chess (1283). The connection between **Babra and Hiersemann** comes accredited by us in the fantastic episode of the pages of the Biblia de Bonifacio Ferrer (see quoted piece by Ribelles Comín). Hiersemann was compiling numerous and splendid catalogues. In the **catalogues 366 and 371** the 2 pages of *Biblia Valenciana* were there in a book titled *Anales de la present casa de Portaceli*. These catalogues must have been edited in 1908 or 1909.

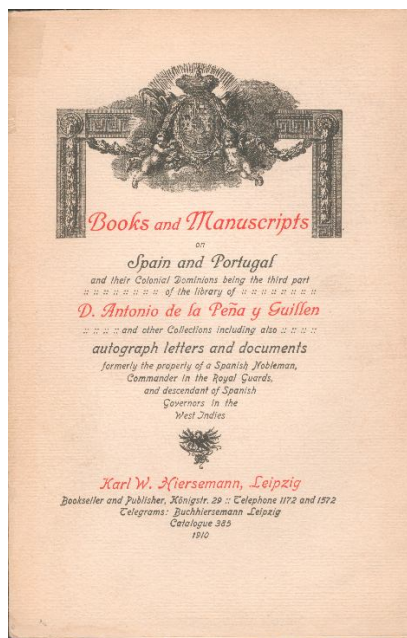
Ribelles Comín points out the contradiction the prestigious antiquary of Leipzig nods in his catalogues minutely the MS of Portaceli where *Biblia Valenciana* comes from, which in reality is in the hands of his friend Babra.

But there's no contradiction at all. A peculiar way of working is clear. From 1915 when Babra associated with Battle and moved his library to the Street Canuda was when he started publishing catalogues, and in Palau's phrase "little by little that radiant light was extinguished". How did he work then prior to the moment when he sold his precious acquisitions? The story of *Biblia Valenciana* suggests that he sent complete data sheets to prestigious librarians such as Hiersemann which the German inserted in his catalogues directed at rich collectors (one of them being J.G. White).

Later the connection among the three is demonstrated. So the harmony of the dates perfectly ensembles the story. Palau tells Ventura Sureda

(in 1952 – 1953) that the trade happened 40 years ago. So that there's no margin for error we must place it between 1912-1914. On the other hand in his *Memorias* he gives crucial information: **everything happened when Babra had the Library on Méndez Nuñez Street**, so it must have been before Babra moved to Canuda Street.

On the other side, in 1913 Whitey Hiersemann must have come to Spain on the occasion of the first facsimile of the Escorialense codex so that they could promote themselves¹⁸³.



Catalogue 385 of K.W. Hiersemann from the library of the author. In my opinion there's a way of working very singularly between Babra and Hiersemann (curiously Ribelles Comín, who is the source, does not perceive it). The first man (who did not compile catalogues at the time) facilitated the antiquity of Leipzig, so was interested in Spanish topics. This way the unique pieces went to increase the most noticeable libraries of America, where Hiersemann usually traded. This takes me to think of Vicent's book that can be described in some German catalogues with special preference to those published in 1913. In this description Hiersemann could reveal the content and the mystery of Vicent's book would be forever solved.

We already said that nowadays Vicent's book does not seem to be found in the Public Library of Cleveland. The book could have changed owners before the first owner's death in 1928. Or it could have ended up in the hands of a family member who did not even know the treasure he or she had. In any case, a road is opened for

¹⁸³ In our consultations and personal visits to the Library of The Escorial Abbey, in company of our friends Manuel Galindo and Miguel Llácer, it has not been possible to obtain more concrete data about the genesis of this facsimile edition.

investigation much simpler than the one performed by Ventura Sureda, with the guarantee besides given by the security of the facts. Palau refers in 1952 that the story was told by his friends Pin i Soler and Font de Rubinat, but we saw that Pin i Soler had died in 1930 and it's very strange that Palau would wait til his 85 years to remove the issue.

We have found an explanation for this. Font de Rubinat died in 1948. A year previous to the edition of the posthumous piece by Pin i Soler *Comentaris sobre llibres y Autors* that had remained unedited for a while over the author's express desire. Among the promoters of this piece appears Antonio Palau. The book gathers numerous data sheets of writers and chess topics, which Pin i Soler had done while alive, but completely silences everything about Vicent's book in a surprising way being about Pin and Soler, since he was obsessed with the topic, as beautifully shown in his chess book of 1899.

We've consulted a copy our friend the librarian **Rafael Solaz** has, and he agrees with us that if a data sheet existed about Vicent's book, then Font de Rubinat decided to leave it out of the book. Then as years went by the severity of the secret pact had been completely attenuated (the buyer must have already died) he does not want to take his secret to the grave and tells it in detail to Palau, showing him the text written about it by Pin i Soler. From there Palau states in 1952 that the story was confirmed by two friends.

And Palau, even though 85 years old, does not falter; it is his pledge knowing the responsibility that has fallen on his shoulders.

Now we will give one more datum fundamental for dinging the book. In 1912 Babra possesses a MS in Latin referring to chess. It is bound in a volume with a parchment cover and preceded by another two Latin MSs (forming a miscellaneous or factitious codex), the first of them titled *Processus per hominem interiorem habito contra diabolum ante tribunale Xpi*. It has 22 unnumbered folios, **size 22.5 x 15cm**,

font of the late XIV or early XV century. This through description was taken from Paluzie¹⁸⁴.

Recently thanks to the Catalunya Library I've come across the fact that this codex was not part of the important sale of codices done by Babra from 1912 to 1915 to the aforementioned institution.

Where is this MS? It would be important to know its current fate since I suspect that it could give us a clue about Vicent's book. Even from a twofold: it must have been sold to the same person or was simply part of a factitious volume described, since it is facilitated by the measurements of the codex that allow harboring a book in 4°. **This would then be the description with which the book would be seated in the catalogue¹⁸⁵ of Hiersemann:** enough camouflaged to many, and at the same time explicit for an educated buyer or connoisseur of the topic.

Having shared all our effort with the reader and the result of our investigation it is the moment to join forces, to propitiate the day of the longed reunion with Vicent's book. We lost its immediacy because the game of fate, by chance, has already been won. This is the well deserved ending that this story deserves.

¹⁸⁴ Primer Ensayo de Bibliografía Española de Ajedrez. Barcelona, 1912. One more proof in favor of the dates 1912-1914, with preference to the sale being done in 1913.

¹⁸⁵ Let us not rule the possibility that Hiersemann did not catalogue the piece before the certainty of his sale to White, but it encourages us to think in this possibility that he could have catalogued it even 2 times the Ms. Referring to the Biblia Valenciano, despite coming from a very clandestine sale. In any case the motive for the search does not vary.

CHAPTER 24

Torquemada's book is the same as Timoneda's¹⁸⁶

Imagination is more important than knowledge.
ALBERT EINSTEIN

In August 1993 I wrote an article¹⁸⁷ in the Dutch chess magazine *De Problemist* in which I expressed doubts about the existence of Torquemada's book.

According to Palau and Dulcet¹⁸⁸ the book by Antonio Torquemada was found in the library in the Municipality of Valencia¹⁸⁹, with the catalog number 334904. In reference to Torquemada's book it is strange that the book should disappear in Valencia, but then reappear in Juan Timoneda's book.

Torquemada:

El ingenio or “ juego de marro”, de punta o damas
(a game of draughts, checkers, or the ladies' game)

¹⁸⁶ This chapter was already published in **WESTERVELD, Govert** (2004) *La reina Isabel la Católica, su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna de ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas*. In collaboration with José Antonio Garzón Roger, Valencia. Generalidad Valenciana, Secretaria Autonómica de Cultura.

¹⁸⁷ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1993) *El ingenio o juego de marro, de punta o damas*. In: *De Problemist*, issue 4, pp 87-88

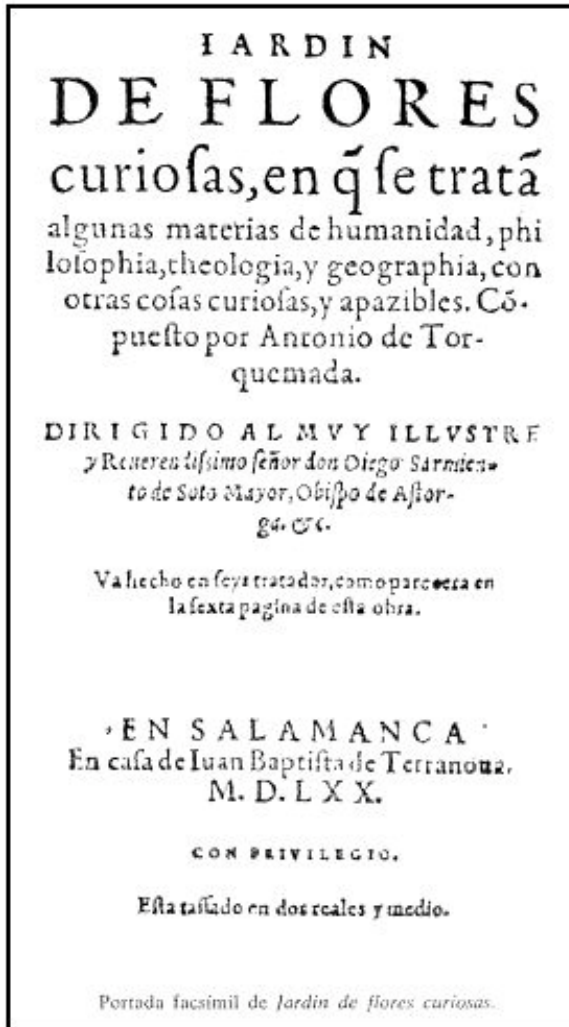
¹⁸⁸ **PALAU Y DULCET, Antonio** (1971) *Manual del libro Hispano-Americano*, section 23, p. 319

¹⁸⁹ The chess historian Jose Antonio Garzon found that this number is the number of the book of Torquemada, as stated in the book of Palau Dulcet. However, it is not the old number of Torquemada of the Biblioteca Municipal de Valencia, because nobody there has ever known this work.

Timoneda

Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda

(A book called *Ingenioud, diagonal morris (Draughts)* written by Juan Timoneda)



Antonio de Torquemada's Book of 1570

A study about both texts says that Torquemada already used the word *damas* and this is precisely what I have strong doubts about for the following reasons:

1. No one in 1993 had really seen Torquemada's book.
2. In 1550 the term *juego de las damas* wasn't generally known.
3. Between 1640 and 1650 the term *marro* or *marro de punta* was no longer known and it is logical to suppose that Nicolás Antonio added the word *damas* to the text to infuse clarity.
4. In the upcoming books and manuscripts none of the authors were referred to as Torquemada.
- 5.

If these (logical) reasons are true, then we can conclude that the book known as Torquemada's is in fact the one belonging to Timoneda. The imprinted book by Timoneda would then originate in 1547 and it is logical to suppose that it would not include¹⁹⁰ the term *damas*.

Today we know that in 1556 Juan de Junta had a printing press and libraries in Burgos and Salamanca. A description of the inventory in Burgos by the solicitor Pedro de Espinosa in 1556 demonstrated that there existed 11 books of the *juego de damas* also known as draughts or checkers.

1. It could refer to a book written for the ladies or *damas* or for the most noble ladies with the title *juego de damas* (draughts?), as we now see in many sites, without the title *juego de damas* having anything to do with a boardgame.
2. It could be that in the Kingdom of Castile they used the term *damas* instead of *juego de marro de punta* when referring to a draughts game, as they usually did in Valencia. It was customary to open the game with a lady or

¹⁹⁰ In 1547 Timoneda established himself as a bookseller, but according to M. Grajales there is a copy in the B. J. Espian Bellveser of a work of Timoneda between 1540 and 1550 entitled *El Pater noster glosado sobre la salutacion del Arcangel sant Gabriel a nuestra Señora. Glosado por....., Es obra muy sentida y de nuevo estilo. Con dos chançonetas para cantar la noche de Navidad*. (F. Martí Grajales, *Ensayo de un diccionario biográfico y bibliográfico de los poetas que florecieron en el Reino de Valencia hasta el año 1700* [Madrid: 1927], ad v. Cordero, 130).

dama¹⁹¹ and this could be the reason for giving this name to the new game, a term that in later years would also be used in the Kingdom of Aragón.

The reputed Dutch historian of damas or chess Dr. Arie van der Stoep had never believed in Ir. Gerard Bakker's that the juego de damas or Ladies' Game had evolved from chess. But it is convenient that we know about Ir. Gerard Bakker's hypothesis published in *Het Nieuwe Damspel*¹⁹² in 1983:

The game of draughts or checkers (juego de damas) was created from the game of chess:

1. The game board for draughts is the same as the chessboard.
2. The name "ficha y dama" token and queen corresponds to the name "peon y dama" pawn and queen in the ancient Spanish books.
3. The movements of the pawns and queen are analogous to the movements in the game of chess: the pawns only move forward and the dama in the draughts game like the dama (queen) in chess can affect long moves.
4. The promotion of the pawn in draughts is effected in the eighth isle of the game board, the same as in a game of chess.
5. The motive for the introduction of the dama or queen into the game of Alquerque 12 (12 black and 12 white pieces) at the start of the XVI century in Spain was due to the great past success of the powerful queen in the game of chess.

Another great historian of draughts Karel Wendel Kruijswijk did not agree with me on thinking that the texts from the books by Juan Timoneda of 1635 were published in 1550. My 12 reasons reflected in the *Het Nieuwe Damspel*⁸ magazine about Timoneda in 1989 were:

¹⁹¹ **TIMONEDA, Juan de** (1993) Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda. Estudio históricobiográfico de Govert Westerveld. Page 17 says: "And if by chance Black would have Dama in the opening, to have it well placed in the game one has to put it in square c and take care not to move the two pawns which are in & and p. [is this & and p. correct? Check this to ensure - you're the expert] because they are two guards who prevent the enemy from crowning its pawn.

¹⁹² **BAKKER, GERARD** (1983) Dammen met A. van der Stoep. In Dutch Draughts Magazine *Het Nieuwe Damspel* Utrecht, p. 44

Argumentation

1. The author of the dama book didn't criticize earlier writers of dama books. This is completely different in the cases of the books of Pedro Ruiz Montero (1591), Lorenzo Valls (1597), Juan Garcia Canalejas (1650), and Joseph Carlos Garcez (1684). Pedro Ruiz Montero referred to the author of another dama book that was published a long time ago in Valencia. Lorenzo Valls referred to the "Andaluz" (Pedro Ruiz Montero). Juan Garcia Canalejas (1650) referred to the "Valenciano" (Lorenzo Valls), and finally Joseph Carlos Garcez criticized Juan Garcia Canalejas.



Juan de Timoneda

2. All the books on Spanish dama of the 16th and 17th centuries have opening game and endgames, but none of these books has problems. for the only book that enlists problems is the book of Juan de Timoneda.

3. The book of Juan de Timoneda has diagrams, as did the first chess book written by Lucena and printed in 1495 for the son John, child of

the Reyes Católicos.

4. In all the books from and after 1558 we see an introduction directed at the ecclesiastic authorities requesting approval for printing. In the book of 1635 we see nothing of this kind. If the book of 1635 was simply a reprint of an earlier work (1547), such an authorization would not be necessary.

5. The book of Juan de Timoneda has diagrams with letters instead of numbers, as did the other books of the 16th and 17th centuries. We may suppose that letters were used in the first part of the 16th century. Afterwards it became customary to use numbers.

6. In the book of 1635 we don't find the famous composition saque de peón which was mentioned by Montero in 1591. Such famous composition couldn't have failed to be noted in 1635! The explanation would be simple if the book of 1635 were actually written at least 50 years before its publication.

7. In the book of 1635 the author is using the words barra and barra larguera for the long diagonal. These words were normally used in the backgammon game that was forbidden by law in 1480. Later on other authors used the expression calle larga.

8. According to scholars who investigated the books and the life of Juan de Timoneda we know that he frequently used the double d, double f, and double s. The same is the case in the dama book of 1635.

9. The book contains 8 compositions of Antonio Miron y del Castillo. Here it is necessary to cite Richard Twiss (Miscellanies II, London 1805, page 138/139): "I once saw a small Spanish book *Juego de las Damas* being only ends of games and cuts of the board, printed around the year 1610". I think it is quite likely that Twiss referred to the small book of Antonio Miron y del Castillo that was reprinted in the edition of 1635.



Arm of Juan de Timoneda in the form of squares

10. In the book of 1635 the name of the game is juego de marro de punta and not one page has the expression el juego de damas. In all the other books known in the XVI and XVII centuries the word damas is used.

11. The book of Juan de Timoneda is called *Libro llamado ingenio, el qual trata del juego del marro de punta*. The word ingenio is also used in the title of Antonio de Torquemada's book of 1547.

12. Pedro Ruiz Montero refers in his book of 1591 to a composition of another dama book printed in Valencia a long time ago. It is generally assumed that Pedro Ruiz Montero referred to Antonio de Torquemada's book of 1547, which has been lost. But I think this is unlikely because Pedro Ruiz Montero used the word antiguamente (a long time ago/ancient) whereas there are only 44 years between 1591 and 1547. As I pointed out earlier in this magazine, I think it is quite likely that Antonio de Torquemada's dama book of 1547 was not the first Spanish dama book. Pedro Ruiz Montero may have meant a dama book of Valle.

It may seem strange, but all of these 12 reasons were systematically refuted¹⁹³ by Karel Wendel Kruijswijk in his transcription of the book by Timoneda in 1989. None of the reasons appear logical and valid to him and Kruijswijk finalized this with the following comment, translated from Dutch:

With this a lot of attention has been directed to the reasons argued that gave a motive to this epilogue. There have spurred many contradictions and I see no reason to attribute the work by Timoneda published in 1635 to another author of the XVI century.

Some points in Kruijswijk's criticism are justified. Argument 12 was not correct as the word 'ancient' back then could only have referred to 20 years. But after studying this more profoundly I could add after a couple of months one more argument¹⁹⁴:

13. The title page of Timoneda's dama book states:

"Al qual se han annadido ocho trechas de mucha primor, por Antonio Miron y del castillo". Translation: "With a supplement of eight perfect tricks by Antonio Miron y del Castillo". This means that the word annadido is used to indicate that an original edition (or manuscript) was supplemented by the editor or the publisher. In our case the book of Juan Timoneda of 1635 was a new revised book formed by two ancient books: of a manuscript or book in possession of the famous poet Juan de Timoneda (1520? - 1583) and possibly a booklet of Antonio Miron y del Castillo.

On the other hand, I paid a visit in 1991 to Professor Joan Fuster, Professor Emeritus of Catalan in the Faculty of Philology at the University of Valencia, who had profound knowledge of Juan de Timoneda. My visit to Professor Fuster confirmed¹⁹⁵ my suspicions

¹⁹³ **KRUIJSWIJK, Karel Wendel** (1989) Damwerk Timoneda 1635 in transcriptie. Uitgeverij L'Esprit, Rosmalen, pp. 106-109

¹⁹⁴ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1990) Juan de Timoneda (II), en: Het Nieuwe Damspel, 1990-2. Utrecht, p. 40

¹⁹⁵ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1991) Juan de Timoneda (III), in Het Nieuwe Damspel, 1991-3. Utrecht, p. 67

that the texts in Timoneda's book from 1635 were actually from the XVI century. The Professor also confirmed that the verses in Timoneda's book were couplets of "higher art" (arte mayor) generally used by Castellan poets of the XV century.



Professor Joan Fuster

We were thus able to lower the age of the texts that comprise the book of Timoneda by one century, just as I indicated in my book¹⁹⁶ of 1997 and from which the translation of the last argument is as follows:

14. The original texts in the book of Juan de Timoneda printed in 1635 were not written in 1635 but a century before that. The book printed in 1635 really has two books: one by Juan de Timoneda and another by Antonio Miron y del Castillo whose work, which comes at the end, was most likely written in 1610.

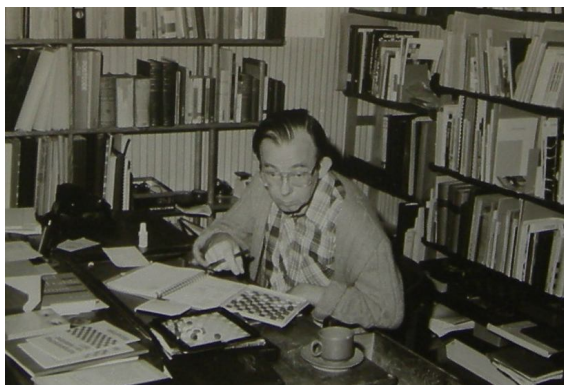
The Dutch historian *Van der Stoep* saw some possibility in the arguments and reasons mentioned¹⁹⁷ especially in 7, 10, and 14:

¹⁹⁶ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1997) *La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno*, p. 229

(...) These three reasons plus reason 2 combined indicate that the book of Timoneda is from the XVI century.

The draughts historian Ir. Gerard Bakker also found it a really strong story¹⁹⁸. Bakker wrote¹⁹⁹:

I am critical on two points. First, the author goes into detail on the proposition by Govert Westerveld's HDN 1989-2 defended draughts book that this is not 1635, but at least 50 years older. It seems to me that in his rejection of Westerveld's arguments he [Kruijswijk] is right and he is not right. Probably right, because Kruiswijk's counterargument to every single point seems relevant. And he is not right, because Westerveld's arguments one by one do not appear as strong, but together they very clearly (continue to) point to the 16th century origin.



Ir. Gerard Bakker

¹⁹⁷ **STOEP, Arie van der** (1993) Over de ouderdom van het Timoneda-2 motief. In: Dutch Draughts Magazine "De Problemist", Number 4, August, pp. 86-87

¹⁹⁸ **BAKKER, Ir. Gerard** (1989) Internationaal Dammen. In Dutch Draughts Magazine *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, p. 33

¹⁹⁹ **BAKKER, Gerard** (1990) Nieuwe boeken. In Dutch Draughts Magazine *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, Number 1, January-March, p. 22

A new comment of Kruijswijk's

Quickly thereafter Kruijswijk known as one of the best historians in the world with regards to draughts (checkers) wrote an article in the Dutch Draughts Magazine *De Problemist* in which he gave his points of view on Bakker's critical point in relation to Timoneda.

The discussion about a review by Gerard Bakker

What makes me grasp the pen is the contradictory position taken when it comes to the age of Timoneda's work. The reviewer [Bakker] does nothing against my refutation of each separate argument written by one [Westerveld] of the collaborators of his magazine. Still it does not prevent him from involving the proposition that I'm not only right but also wrong, because the by me contested arguments "together they very clearly (continue to) point to the 16th century origin", "This suggests that arguments all of which are weak, if not unsound, together form one strong argument. However, a weak argument does not cut wood and so it cannot be counted, so twelve such arguments, which moreover are more weakening than strengthening each other, cannot be weighed. As long as this remains the case, the 16th-century origin of Timoneda's draughts work is far from likely²⁰⁰.

Until my visit to Professor Fuster my arguments appeared to be very weak to prove that the texts of the book of Timoneda really were from the 16th century and Kruijswijk did not stop showing me my weak points of the hypothesis by saying in another reply:

In the same issue of *Het Nieuwe Damspel* there appears a reaction to what I wrote in my Timoneda book concerning Westerveld's three hypotheses about the time in which the Timoneda draughts work arose. Without going into the details I have argued against this, he [Westerveld] continues to believe that the work of Timoneda goes back to an edition or manuscript from the 16th century, something that I do not believe. His explanation on the use of the word *annadido* also calls for reservations. He will really have to come up with better arguments than has so far been the case²⁰¹.

²⁰⁰ KRUIJSWIJK, Karel Wendel (1990) Een recensie ter discussie. In: Dutch Draughts Magazine *De Problemist* issue 3, June, p. 58

²⁰¹ KRUIJSWIJK, Karel Wendel (1991) Wie was het eerst en wanneer? In: Dutch Draughts Magazine *De Problemist*, February – April, issues 1 and 2, p. 7

The fact that the book of Timonda from 1635 was indicated to have originated a century before was due to the fact that Antonio de Torquemada and Juan de Timoneda were not draughts (checkers) players. But Juan de Timoneda was a plagiarist²⁰² of books and texts taking advantage of becoming their editor and/or bookseller. I very much doubt that he wrote all of the texts that comprise the book from 1635. We can suppose that this man who was a poet, bookseller, and merchant only wrote the rules of the game and composed the book based on diagrams and other sources. What is outstanding in his work is that he considers draughts or checkers as something that belongs to them, in the case of Valencia, using terms like “our game of draughts” first in using this term in this direction²⁰³. Timoneda (1520-1583) as good businessman knew how to organize other people’s text into a booklet about the game of draughts.

We can suppose that when they began to experiment in Valencia using the powerful queen in chess something similar happened in the game of draughts that in those years was called *el marro de punta*, which is apparently a game that was played over lines. *El marro*²⁰⁴, not to be confused with *marro de punta*, was the Valencian name for the

²⁰² **ASENSIO, Eugenio** (1965) *Itinerario del entremés*, Madrid, p. 41. In his work of *Patrañas* we see “*agora nuevamente compuesta*”. In his work “*marro de punta*” we see “*hecho por Juan Timoneda*” and in the work “*Memoria Hispanea*” we observe “*compilado por Joan Timoneda*”.

²⁰³ **TIMONEDA, JUAN** (1993) *Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda. Estudio históricobiográfico de Govert Westerveld*. On page 16 it says: From the beginning it seemed to me to admonish our “*marro de punta*” about how we have to play the game from the beginning with twenty-four pawns, i.e. twelve white and twelve black pieces. By chance one could say: He did not know what he who wrote this book did, because he did not show how we have to play in the beginning, and how you can lose and win.... In the book of Lorenzo Valls 1597 we found in the “to the reader” paragraph: our game of checkers (commonly called *Marro*).

²⁰⁴ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1997) *La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno*. Capítulo 5 de *Marro*, pp. 45-54

Castilian alquerque²⁰⁵ which since time immemorial was a game played over lines, and in this form there was a juego de marro of 3, alquerque of 9, and alquerque of 12, as we know these games in the book of Alfonso X the Wise²⁰⁶. We know from our investigation that the game known as juego marro de punta or game marro de punta was²⁰⁷ different from the game juego de marro or draughts/checkers which was a game that moved diagonally over lines and of which the Castilian name was probably andarraya²⁰⁸. The Catalan²⁰⁹ translation of the chess manuscript by Jacobus de Cessolis mentioned for the first time the term *de punta* and the similar term *postpunt*²¹⁰ comes up in the manuscript by Alfonso X the Wise.

With the introduction of the powerful new queen of chess the way chess was played drastically changed, and so did the game of draughts of today which came about due to a radical modification to the game of andarraya. Today instead of playing with the pawns over lines the pawns of andarraya are placed on the chessboard, and the piece of the

²⁰⁵ WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno. Capítulo 8 de Alquerque, pp. 98-139

²⁰⁶ ALFONSO X EL SABIO (1283) Libro de Ajedrez, dados y tablas de Alfonso X el Sabio, pp. 91-93

GARCIA MORENCOS, PILAR (1987) Libro de Ajedrez, dados y tablas de Alfonso X el Sabio. Editorial Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid, p. 47

²⁰⁷ WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno. Capítulo 6 de Marro de punta, pp. 55-69

²⁰⁸ WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno. Capítulo 7 de Andarraya, pp. 70-96

²⁰⁹ BOFARULL, ENMANEL DE (1902) Libre de Bones Costumes dels Homens e dels Oficis dels Nobles. Sermó d'en Janne Cessulis. En Lati preycat, sobre lo joch dels Scachs trelladat en lo XV en Segle a la lenga Catalana. Segons un MS de la Catadral de Girona, transcrit per Enmanel de Bofarull, Barcelona

²¹⁰ ALFONSO X EL SABIO (1283/1987) Libro de Ajedrez, dados y tablas de Alfonso X el Sabio, p. 249

new powerful queen is introduced²¹¹. Nebrija²¹² clearly said in his 1495 dictionary where he indicated that andarraya is “novum”. Meanwhile the Valencians, inventors of this new powerful queen, were the cause of what would over time become a worldwide revolution regarding chess and draughts.



The King Alfonso X the Wise

In Castile of the XVI century we see the term andarraya replaced with juego de damas for the new game, as proven by the inventor's list Juan de Junta²¹³ de Burgos in 1556. Apparently the andarraya game was sometimes played in the XVI century and both the game and name is confused with the anterior alquerque-12 game.

²¹¹ In private communication the historian Kruijswijk also believes it highly likely that the introduction of the new powerful lady in the game of checkers was originally from Spain

²¹² **NEBRIJA, ANTONIO DE** (1495) *Dictionarium hispano-latinum*, Salamanca. (reimpreso en 1951 por la Real Academia Española -Diccionario Romance (español) en latin. Se conoce de este libro ediciones en: 1494? Evora; 1503 Sevilla; 1506 Paris and y 1513 in Madrid.

²¹³ **PETTAS, WILLIAM** (1995) *A sixteenth-century Spanish bookstore: The inventory of Juan de Junta*, American Philosophical Society, Independence Square, Philadelphia

We see an indication of this in the 1611 encyclopedia by Covarrubias²¹⁴ where they talked about the game of alquerque, but where the rules of playing reference the game of andarraya, because you can capture three pieces. In the case of juego de marro or draughts in the Kingdom of Aragon it is still called the same (juego de marro, juego marro de punta) and only at the end of the XVI century is the term juego de las damas (draughts/checkers) introduced and it is Pedro Ruiz Montero who states that Juego de las damas used to be vulgarly called *el marro*, meanwhile Lorenzo Valls in 1597 is more exact with the title of his book “libro del juego de las damas²¹⁵ por otro nombre marro de punta” which translates to Book of the Game of Draughts, known by another name of diagonal alquerque.

As I indicated earlier, Professor Fuster, expert in the works of Timoneda, confirmed²¹⁶ my suspicion that the language used in the book of Timoneda should be from before 1550. I thought about the year 1535, which the professor checked. Timoneda’s book used the terms barra (line) and barra larguera (diagonal line) and these terms were also used in the book of Lucena²¹⁷. Timoneda also speaks of “trecha²¹⁸”, while other authors, such as Pedro Ruiz Montero²¹⁹ aka “el

²¹⁴ **COVARRUBIAS, SEBASTIAN DE** (1611) Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española. Madrid, 1611. Edición de Martín de Riquer de la Real Academia Española, Editorial Alta Fulla, Barcelona, 1987

²¹⁵ We think that playing with ladies in the marro de punta game people started calling it el juego de las damas (the game with the ladies) in the beginning, which was later abbreviated to el juego de damas or simply damas. Presumably this term made its entrance into the kingdom of Castile and over time was accepted into the kingdom of Aragon. So in the introduction of his book to the reader Pedro Ruiz Montero speaks of el juego de las damas (the game of the ladies) and in the title of his 1591 book we see el juego de damas (the game of ladies), while Lorenzo Valls in the title of his 1597 book speaks of (juego de las damas (the game of the ladies).

²¹⁶ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1993) Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda. Transcription, p. 9

²¹⁷ **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1993) Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda. Transcription, p. 84

²¹⁸ Trecho(s), changed to “Trecha(s)” in Timoneda, was a word from the beginning of XVI century. Here we observe in Hernando Alonso de Herrera: “Pues quiero hazer como en el juego del axedrez o alquer, <et in ludo latrunculorum calculorumque> que, quando la una parte se maravilla como le han vencido,

Andaluz" and Lorenzo Valls, aka "el Valenciano" speak rather of "treta". On the other hand, in the book of Timoneda we see a kind of decorations in the diagrams that also exist in the book²²⁰ of Lucena. Timoneda does not mention the game juego de damas at any time, but continues calling the game marro de punta. Timoneda described in the style of Lucena how to play this new game. Timoneda does not involve other authors of draughts books either. Timoneda's annotations are letters, not numbers. In summary, what Lucena was to the introduction of the new powerful Dama in chess Timoneda was to the introduction of the new powerful Dama in the game of draughts.

Chess (with the new powerful Dama) and Draughts have in my opinion a common connection: the same Spanish origin and the same Kingdom of Valencia, being the result of the complex, extensive, and unusual amount of cultures that occurred in this territory. We cannot forget in this connection that the chess book of Francesch Vicent²²¹

buelvense a retratar todos los **trecho** que han pasado. Assi agora, que estays espantado como os he concludido, repitase por orden lo passado, porque, si de algo os arrepentis, os alçeyis dello, y lo que aveis confessado vaya por no dicho. Ca esta nuestra disputa no es contiendas, sino busqueda de la verdad..." En: BONILLA Y SAN MARTIN, ADOLFO (1920). *Revue Hispanique* (reprint 1964), issue 50. Un antiraristotélico del Renacimiento. Hernando Alonso de Herrera y su Breve disputa de ocho levadas contra Aristotel y sus secuaces.

²¹⁹ There was a Pedro Roiz Montero or Pedro Ruiz Montero who in 1575 wrote the work "Libro de Reloges solares. Compuesto por ... discipulo del Maestro Hieronymo Muñoz: en el qual se muestra a hazer relojes, en llano y paredes a qualquier viento descubiertas, levantadas a plomo, o inclinadas hazia tierra...". The printer was Pedro de Huarte. The book is still available in Madrid, Real Academia de Ciencias Exactas, Físicas y Naturales 38-S.XVI; Madrid, Fundación Lázaro Galdiano Inv. 7; B. Palacio; B.U. Salamanca; Bca. British L., sig.: 532.d.32; B.N.M. R-4.465; Nueva York, Hispanic Society; Columbus, Univ. Ohio; Berkeley, Uni. California; Massachusetts, Bibl. Publ. Boston.

²²⁰ **LUCENA, LUIS RAMIREZ DE** (1497) *Repetición de amores e arte de Axedres con CL Juegos de Partido*. Salamanca. Edición J.M. de Cossio, Madrid 1953

²²¹ **VICENT, FRANCESH** (1495) *Libre dels joch partitis del Scachs en nombre de 100 ordenat e compost per mi Francesh Vicent, nat en la ciutat de Segorbe, criat e vehí de la insigne e valeroso ciutat de Valencia. Y acaba: A loor e gloria de nostre Redemtor Jesu Christ fou acabat lo dit libre dels jochs partitis dels scachs en la*

was printed in Valencia in 1495. Exactly in this year Antonio de Nebrija²²² confirmed that the word dama was new. Also the Valencian manuscript of modern chess Scachs d'amor²²³ dates from the last quarter of the XV century.

Timoneda says it very clearly in his draughts book damas²²⁴ "nuestro marro de punta" (our draughts game) where he introduces the reader to the Valencian game, explaining all the details, rules, and how it has to be played at the start of the game. The rapid dissemination of new chess in Europe during the sixteenth century had to be simultaneous with the draughts game, and almost certainly the Jews from Spain had an active participation in this phenomenon in the sixteenth century.

Apart from clearly revealing the beginning of a new game with the new powerful Dama and that it does not refer anywhere to the juego de

sinsigne ciutat de Valencia e estampat per mans de Lope de Roca Alemany e Pere Trinchet librere á XV días de Maig del any MCCCCLXXXV.

²²² **NEBRIJA, ANTONIO DE** (1495) *Dictionarium hispano-latinum*, Salamanca. (reimpreso en 1951 por la Real Academia Española - *Diccionario Romance* (español) en latin. Known editions of this book are: 1494? Evora; 1503 Sevilla; 1506 París and 1513 in Madrid. Nebrija translated the Latin word domina by "dama es casi señora" and thereafter put novum in his dictionary.

²²³ **CALVO, Ricardo** (1985a) Un nuevo manuscrito de ajedrez del siglo XV. In: Magazine "Jaque". San Sebastián Año XV. Number 173. 15 de abril, pp. pp 252-253

CALVO, Ricardo (1985b) Ein neues Schachmanuskript aus dem 15. Jahrhundert. In: Europa Rochade. Maintal. Number 3, p. 28

CALVO, Ricardo (1985c) Un nouveau manuscrit échiquéen du XV siècle. Europe In: Échecs. Besançon. Numbers 319-320. Juillet-Août, pp. 434-435

CALVO, Ricardo (1991) Birthplace of modern chess. In: New in Chess, Alkmaar, (Holanda), Number 7, pp. 82-87

CALVO, Ricardo & MEISSENBURG, Egbert (1992) "Valencia, Geburtsstätte des modernen Schachs". Schach-Journal (1992), Number 3, pp. 34-46

CALVO, Ricardo & MEISSENBURG, Egbert (1995b) Valencia und die Geburt des neuen Schachs. In: IFK (Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften, Wien), pp. 77-89

VINYOLES, Narcís (1480?). *Escacs d'amor*, Valencia; Edición de Antonio Ferrando Francés, Universitat de València, Facultat de Filologia, Narcís Vinyoles i la seua obra, Valencia, 1978

²²⁴ **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1993) Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda. Transcripción, p. 16

damas (draughts), Timoneda's texts are a demonstration of further evidence that this new game originated from chess:

“Y si acaso el negro tuviere dama de principio de juego para estar bien puesta en el tablero ha la de poner en la casa de la ç. y guardese de mouer dos peones hasta que mas no se pueda hazer: los quales estan en &. y en p, porque son dos guardas para que el contrario no entre a dama”

Translation:

“And if by chance the black had a Dama in the beginning of the game, to be well placed on the board it has to be placed on square ç and one needs to refrain from moving two pawns for as long as possible: they are on &. and p, because they are the two guards preventing the enemy from advancing its pawn to the Dama.....”.



The Market of Valencia, 1850 (Chapuy)

Pedro Ruiz Montero does not speak in his book about a Dama in the beginning of the game differently from Lorenzo Valls²²⁵ who observes in his book:

²²⁵ **VALLS, LORENÇO** (1597) Libro del Juego de las Damas, por otro nombre el Marro de Punta, Valencia. - (Biblioteca del Palacio, Madrid), p. 36

Cuando se juega con damas hechas, lo mejor es jugar primero, si la dama del contrario esta en el numero 30 que es donde la pone los mas jugadores, o los mejores por mejor dezir: y la dama del blanca ha de estar en el numero 3, porque alli esta mejor: y ha de estar el blanco en los menores numeros.

Translation:

When you play with Damas in the beginning, it is best to play first, if the enemy's Dama is on number 30, that is the square where most, or better said the best, players put it: and the white Dama has to be on number 3, because there it is better positioned, and white ought to be on lower numbers."

Juan Garcia Canalejas²²⁶ in the third treatise of his book even talks about playing with two against two Damas:

Donde se contiene 30 juegos, o salidas para jugar de mano, y para de postre, poniendo el Negro sus damas en el numero 30 y 31 y por parte del blanco en los numeros 2 y 3.

Translation:

Where it has 30 games, or openings to start the game, and for the response of the same, the Black side puts its Damas on numbers 30 and 31 and the White side puts its two Damas on numbers 2 and 3.

This feature of starting the same with the new powerful Dama in the first row of the board in the game juego de marro de punta (draughts game) shows again similarity to the new powerful Dama in the new modern chess game and that this new [draughts] game was born out of chess. Thanks to Timoneda we know six compositions in this mode.

To accurately reflect the history we should note here that in the original book of Timoneda the pieces were pawns and Damas and not crowned discs (double discs for a Dama).

²²⁶ **GARCIA CANALEJAS, JUAN** (1650) **VALLS, LORENÇO** (1597) Libro del Juego de las Damas, por otro nombre el Marro de Punta, Valencia. - (Biblioteca del Palacio, Madrid), p. 36). Libro del Jugo de las Damas, Zaragoza, p. 122



Diagram 1



Diagram 2



Diagram 3



Diagram 4



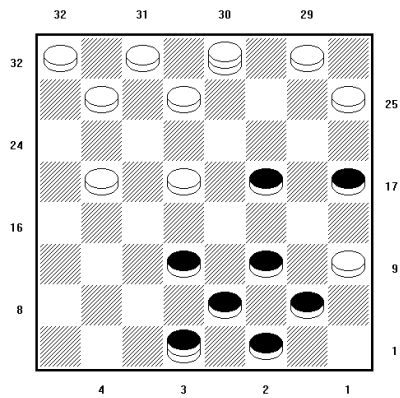
Diagram 5



Diagram 6

On the other hand at the start of the game the black pawns are put on the low numbers and the white pawns on the high numbers. I have shown a true reflection of Timoneda’s book in the diagrams on previous pages²²⁷.

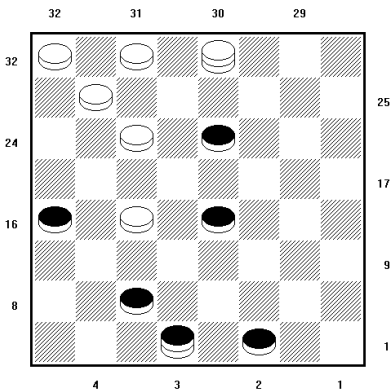
Diagram 4



4. 18-21(25x18) 17-21 (30x17) 11-14 (18x11) 6x24 (17x6)
3x30 (29-25) 5-10 (25-21) 30x17 (28-23) 17-30 (31-27) 24-28.

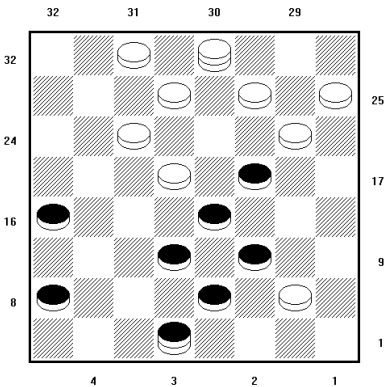
²²⁷ The diagrams are in the book “Libro llamado ingenio, el qual trata del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda. Estudio histórico-biográfico de Govert Westerveld, 1993”

Diagram 15



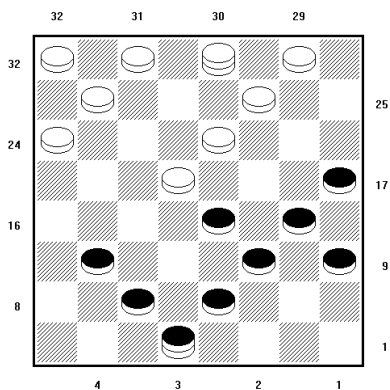
15. 22-27 (31x22) 14-19 (23x14)16-20 (30x16) 3-17 (16x3)
2-6 (3x10)17x11. Identic to Alonso Guerra, number 7.

Diagram 30



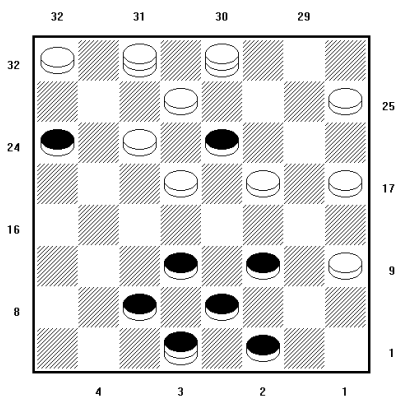
30. 18-22 (27x18) 16-20 (23x16)14x23(30x20) 8-12 (16x7) 3x2.

Diagram 31



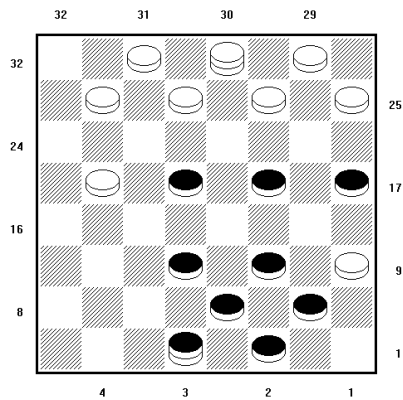
31. 14x23 (30x2) 17-21 (26x17) 12-15 (2x20)10-14 (17x10) 3x16.

Diagram 42



42. 22-26 (30x21) 24-28 (31x24) 10-13 (17x10) 6x31 (24x6) 3x15.

Diagram 43



43. 19-22 (26x19)18-21 (25x18) 17-21 (30x17) 11-14 (18x11) 6x24 (17x6) 3x30.

CONCLUSION:

We consider Timoneda's texts to be the first texts referring to a new game with Damas on a chessboard. Inherent in the relationship comes the figure of the "new powerful Dama" that is created in the game of chess and the figure of the "Dama" or "crowned pawn" in draughts at the same time, which implies the existence of common elements between the two games²²⁸:

The game *marro* or *marro de punta*, which was called draughts by the time, was an invention of Valencia. Timoneda's texts confirm this (our *marro de punta*) and Lorenzo Valls's texts (our *juego de damas*, commonly called *del marro*).

In the diagrams of Timoneda's book we find Damas in the beginning of the game, as it is in chess. We believe that the texts in Timoneda's book are close to 1520.

The texts in the book of Timoneda are closely related to chess, as has been demonstrated by the chess historian Jose Antonio Garzon in the forthcoming chapter.

The birth of the *marro de punta* game was definitively established in 1495. It is possible, as happened with the powerful new queen in chess, that there was a dormant period to teach the game prior to 1495. We consider that the draughts book of Torquemada²²⁹ is not verified with proofs and consequently we deny its existence.

²²⁸ WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1997) La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno. Chapter 6, *Marro de Punta*, p. 69

WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1994) Historia de la nueva dama poderosa. En: *Homo Ludens. Der spielende Mensch*, IV. International Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule « Mozarteum », Salzburg, pp. 119-120

²²⁹ Torquemada published his first work in 1553. In it he deals with the game of chess, but not with the game of checkers. Had he really authored a book of checkers, then he would surely also have discussed this game. The books he wrote are: 1553 *Los colloquios satíricos, con un colloquio/pastoril, y gracioso al cabo/dellos hechos por Antonio/de Torquemada...*, Mondoñedo

CHAPTER 25

Timoneda's book on draughts (1635) and its connection with modern chess

José A. Garzón Roger

*The best camouflage of all is the plain and simple truth,
¡Because nobody ever believes it!*
MAX FRISCH

One of the most intriguing and fascinating books in the bibliography of the game of draughts is entitled: *Libro llamado ingenio, el cual trata del Juego del Marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda*. Only one copy exists and its whereabouts are unknown. The book was published in Toulouse (France), in 1635, and the circumstances surrounding its publication are very strange. The author, Timoneda, was already dead (1583) and the book was published, in Spanish, in France. Govert Westerveld, a world authority on the history of draughts, conducted detailed, scientific research and he concluded that the work was from the previous century, perhaps from around 1550, when Timoneda was a book dealer and publisher in Valencia. It would be wonderful for the bibliography on draughts to be able to establish

1564 Historia/del invencible Cava/llero Don Olivante de Laura Prin/cipe de Macedona, que por sus/admirables hazañas vino a ser/emperador de Constantino./pla....., En Barcelona por Claudio Bernat al Aguila fuerte.

1570 Jardin de flores curiosas, en que se tratan algunas materias de humanidad, philosophia, theologia, y geographia, con otras cosas curiosas, y apazibles. Compuesto por Antonio de Torquemada.

1574 El Manual de Escribientes

In discussions the foremost expert in the field of Antonio de Torquemada and professor at the University of Salamanca Lina Rodriguez Cacho replied as follows:

Indeed, the only information I still have about that book of Torquemada is the one I already gave and have published (el prólogo de la edición de Obras completas en Turner, and in the chapter dedicated to "Coloquio del juego" of Torquemada in my book *Pecados sociales y literatura satírica en el Siglo XVI* (Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid).

this fact with more certainty, and perhaps we would find that it was the first book ever printed on the subject.

We thoroughly agree with Dr. Westerveld, who has written about this issue²³⁰ and considers that there must be a relationship between the book by Torquemada and the one by Timoneda (perhaps Timoneda based his work on Torquemada's lost book, and the latter may entail an even greater mystery, which we will discuss later). If a book on draughts (or marro de punta, as it was originally called in Spanish) was published in Valencia in 1547, or even earlier, it must have left some kind of a trace. 1547 was the first year in which Timoneda's name appears in the *Tacha Real*²³¹ as a book dealer, which was the same year when the world's first book on draughts (by Torquemada) was supposedly published. However, up until now, all that is known of this book is a bibliographical reference furnished by Nicolás Antonio in 1696. This fascinating and extremely valuable story hangs from that thin thread.

My experience as a researcher tells me that a sole reference to a book without any further confirmation can be very prone to error. I mean without confirmation in any other source, since as far as we know today, all the information published time and time again about the existence of a copy of this book in Valencian libraries²³² has no foundation.

²³⁰ **TIMONEDA, JUAN** (1993). *Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda*. Estudio histórico-biográfico de Govert Westerveld.

²³¹ **PHILIPPE BERGER**: *Libro y Lectura en la Valencia del Renacimiento*. Edicions Alfons el Magnànim. Institució Valenciana d'Estudis i Investigació, Valencia, 1987. Volume 2, p. 538.

²³² Both Palau, in his famous *Manual del Librero Hispanoamericano* (2nd Edition, 1948-1976) and Vindel (in *Solaces Bibliográficos*, 1942) speak of this copy but, in my opinion, they got their information from Dr. Cárceles Sabater, who in his 1904 book, raises the question, though in doubtful terms ("copies probably existed in the old Valencian Library"). It was precisely Dr. Cárceles who found the copy of Timoneda's book, which was seemingly the only one. After that, the error became more generalised. My personal experience tells me that that when there is only one reference, the possibilities of error are very great. In an attempt to clarify this

Should we doubt that the book by Torquemada, or by another author, was ever printed? No, it is very likely that a book on draughts was published in Valencia in the middle of the 16th century. The title of the book given by Nicolás Antonio is very precise and seems very appropriate for a book on draughts that would have been written at that time in Valencia. In the second book on draughts, which is also Valencian, Pedro Ruiz Montero (1591) mentions a book published long before in Valencia, but he doesn't provide the author's name. We also see another reference to an old book on draughts²³³ in the *Inventory of Juan de Junta* from 1556.

We consulted an authority on Torquemada, Lina Rodríguez Cacho, who is a professor at the University of Salamanca, in the hope that she would be able to find more information but, once again, this was not the case²³⁴. All this leads us to consider other possibilities in our

question, we asked both María Cruz Cabeza, Director of the Biblioteca Histórica de la Universidad de Valencia, and Carmen Gómez Senent of the Biblioteca Municipal Central. As usual, they helped us with diligence and empathy but unfortunately, with the information they have at their disposal today, they ruled out the presence of Torquemada's book in both libraries.

²³³ It must have referred to the 1547 book, although we are not certain that it was a technical book and its small format might suggest other possibilities.

²³⁴ Lina Rodríguez explained the following to us in a private conversation. In some of her work on Torquemada she mentions *El Ingenio*, for example in *Pecados sociales y literatura satírica en el siglo XVI: los Coloquios de Torquemada*. (Lina Rodríguez Cacho. Ediciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1989). In Chapter 2 ("La Represión del jugador"), Professor Rodríguez mentions twice Torquemada's book on marro. She makes the point that the author of the *Coloquios Satíricos* must have been very knowledgeable about the games he partially criticises. But she suggests that in his technical book he might have praised the games, like Lorenzo Valls did. In *Coloquios*, Torquemada gives examples of acceptable games such as Chess and others, but he doesn't mention *marro de punta* (draughts), which is surprising if he was the only person in the world to have written a book on the subject-and a good one at that, which would have been his only book published until then. See also: Lina Rodríguez: *Antonio de Torquemada. Obras Completas I*. Biblioteca Castro, Turner (Madrid, 1994). She also refers to the book on draughts when she mentions an episode, which supposedly involved Torquemada in real life, where he cheated in a card game in Italy, with marked cards and things of that nature. This isn't exactly proof in Torquemada's favour, in fact quite the contrary, given that the first treatise on draughts, according to Ruiz Montero's comment, had

search for the truth. It is easy to prove, even today, that there is a connection between Timoneda and Torquemada, even in regards to draughts: they are both well-known authors from the second half of the 16th century, harbingers of the novella prior to Cervantes, and are often studied together, for example in Italy. These authors seemed to share a common interest in similar subjects. In fact, without necessarily being draughts Specialists, it is not surprising that both might have written a book on draughts, motivated by their curiosity and avidity for knowledge. Another basic fact is that they both seemed to have a connection with the realm of books in 1547, unless there is an error in the case of Torquemada. And, the most important factor is that the names²³⁵ of both authors begin with the letter “T” which could be the source of an error made by the bibliophile who provided the bibliographical reference to Nicolás Antonio, and the mistake could have perpetuated itself.

Therefore, thanks to the Dr. Westerveld’s research, today we must take into account three possibilities, and in each case there is a connection between Timoneda and Torquemada.

1. The book by Torquemada existed and Juan de Timoneda, a book dealer and publisher who started working in the same year (1547), participated in its publishing. It seems to be a logical option, but has the disadvantage that in the book from 1635, Torquemada’s name is not mentioned anywhere.

2. There was an error in the bibliographical reference that was given to Nicolás Antonio, which led to a confusion between the two names and it was really meant to be Timoneda. Considering what we know today, perhaps this is the most plausible option. The book from 1635, therefore, would have been a re-edition, featuring problems by Mirón

an excellent standard and offered meticulous analyses. We have laboured hard looking for the necessary proof to ascertain the authorship of Torquemada and, with almost absolute certainty, have concluded by disclaiming Torquemada as the author of a book on draughts. We are aware of the fact that this will upset our current ideas on of draughts literature, but we also understand that time has come to acknowledge Timoneda as the author of *El ingenio o juego del marro de punta*, Valencia, 1547.

²³⁵ Note that both surnames have four syllables and would be easy to confuse in a reference-card on both authors.

del Castillo. In the book by Timoneda, as we will see, we get the impression that there could not have been an earlier²³⁶ book on draughts because it is completely based on a work about Chess. This idea is supported by the fact that Timoneda's and Torquemada's titles could be superimposed, seeing as the addition of the word damas was probably added by Nicolás Antonio²³⁷. Then, as Dr. Westerveld suggests, the book by Timoneda was published in 1547 in Valencia,

²³⁶ At times, a mysterious author named Valle is mentioned as a candidate for this important landmark achievement. The similarity with the Spelling of Valls, from Alicante, makes us wary. However, the highly reputed bibliophile and draughts player from Valladolid, Víctor Cantalapiedra Martín, gave Govert Westerveld solid evidence of the existence of this author, as he is mentioned in the MS. by Alonso Guerra at the end of the 16th century (it contains the reference "as Valle says"), making an analytical comment that is not found in the 1597 book by Lorenzo Valls. Another piece of evidence in favour of Valle's existence is that he is mentioned in the interesting MS. *Días geniales ó lúdicas* by Rodrigo Caro (1626), where in his discussion of draughts, he remarks: "On this game a Valencian wrote a book that I saw printed and read some years ago, and another called Valle." The first interpretations of this book indicated that Caro was referring to Valls, but the technical information contributed by Víctor Cantalapiedra has raised serious doubts about this issue. Furthermore, the name appears as Valle in all the copies of the MS, as was recently confirmed to us (our thanks for this gesture) by Librería Anticuaria Galgo (Asturias), which is in possession of a copy of the MS.-a faithful reproduction of the copy which belonged to Jovellanos. Recently Govert Westerveld pointed out to me that the fact that Alonso Guerra's move where Valle is cited refers to an opening and not a problem, rules out Valle as the author of texts as old as those printed in Valencia in 1547(which only contained problems). Valle, if we accept the fact that he indeed existed, must have been a contemporary of Ruiz Montero, Alonso Guerra and Lorenzo Valls. That is why Guerra speaks of him in the present tense. But, if we accept that Valle is a different author from Valls, there is still another mystery in Rodrigo Caro's text. Who was the Valencian who wrote the earlier book? Caro emphasises the fact that the first book is much older than the one by Valle, by the vagueness of his description: a Valencian wrote a book I saw printed and read some years ago. Pedro Ruiz Montero was from Cordoba and was probably a contemporary of Valle. Valls must be ruled out for chronological reasons and for other more obvious reasons (if Caro remembered the name Valle, how would he forget the name Valls?). By process of elimination, Caro must be referring to the 1547 book and therefore he gives us a basic fact: the author was Valencian. A new piece of evidence in Timoneda's favour.

²³⁷ See study and table on the following pages.

and was the first published work on draughts in the world. A detailed analysis of the book by Timoneda, shows that it bears no connection with any other books on draughts and, therefore, it has to base itself on a related text on Chess, which could clarify many things.

3. The third possibility is that, in spite of all of the above, and with important doubts, the book by Torquemada was indeed published and had no connection with Timoneda. This would imply, as Professor Fuster pointed out to Govert Westerveld, the existence of a first edition of Timoneda's book, or a manuscript whose discovery prompted the book to be published in 1635. This possibility necessarily implies that the book or MS. By Timoneda was earlier than the one by Torquemada because of the above reasons and the ones we shall add below. In short, at least in this case, Timoneda was the first author of a treatise on draughts.

An overview of the table below allows us to see how the draughts books from the 16th century were noted in Nicolás Antonio's work. In light of this, the confusion between Torquemada and Timoneda becomes even more likely.

Titles of the 16th century Spanish books on draughts according to Nicolás Antonio

Torquemada

El ingenio o juego de Marro de punta, o Damas

Vol. I, p. 165

Subject index (p. 666): El ingenio o juego de mano

Ruiz Montero

Del juego de las Damas vulgarmente el Marro

Vol. II, p. 233

Subject index (p. 667): Del juego de las Damas

Lorenzo Valls

Del juego de las Damas por otro nombre el Marro

Vol. II, p. 10

Subject index (p.667): Del juego de las Damas

Literal Titles according to the covers of the books by Timoneda, Ruiz Montero and Valls

Timoneda

Libro llamado ingenio, el qual trata del juego del Marro de punta

Ruiz Montero

Libro del juego de las Damas vulgarmente nombrado el marro

Lorenzo Valls

Libro del juego de las Damas por otro nombre el marro de punta

TIMONEDA = ~~TORQUEMADA~~, VALENCIA, 1547

Now we can draw conclusions that are much more well-founded. We can clearly see the tendency to abbreviate the real title by eliminating words that don't seem substantial; therefore, these bibliographical references are not entirely precise. We have underlined the words that were omitted (or added) from the original titles of the books on draughts in Nicolás Antonio's work. We can then see that Torquemada's title is exactly the same as Timoneda's, and only these two include the two words ingenio and punta, which cannot be a coincidence.

The word damas probably did not appear in the book published in Valencia in 1547 and is included here as a necessary clarification (since we have ruled out that Nicolás Antonio was completely faithful to the title of the books) to indicate that it too is a book on draughts, like the other two mentioned.

Interestingly, the word damas²³⁸ does not appear in the subject index, which confirms Dr. Westerveld's idea that this word never appeared in

²³⁸ In the subject index the term marro appears because of a confusion with the word mano ('hand'). Although there could be other interpretations, depending on who made the above-mentioned subject indexes, if we consider that the monumental work

the book by Torquemada. It must be completely ruled out that the index shows only the beginning of each title, as it appears to happen in the cases of Ruiz Montero and Lorenzo Valls. It unmistakably indicates the subject matter, as is proven by the reference to the four books on Chess²³⁹. Why is Torquemada's book not referenced as a draughts book? The explanation is very simple. Since the subject index was made at a later time, the books and the bibliographical reports had to be checked again to confirm the material. Therefore, it became clear that the word "damas" did not appear on this book. But we can add something even more decisive. After conducting meticulous research on the subject, Dr. Westerveld and I believe that the word "damas" did not appear on the book printed in Valencia in 1547 and that moreover, with a degree of probability nearing absolute certainty, neither did the word Torquemada²⁴⁰!

A mysterious book printed long ago in Valencia

We have seen that the proof of the existence of Torquemada's book seems to rely solely on the description provided in the work by Nicolás Antonio. We can find further, though indirect, evidence of its publication in the next book on draughts, written by Pedro Ruiz Montero (1591), which included not only Spanish references, but from

by Nicolás Antonio was published posthumously, since this erudite died in Madrid in 1684. This could explain why, contrary to the treatises by Ruiz Montero and Valls, it was not known that this was a book on draughts at the time when the index was made.

²³⁹ Alphonsus Ceron, *Del juego del Axedrez*; Damianus de Odemira, *Do Xadrez*; Rodericus Lopez de Segura, *Del juego del Axedrez*; Anonymous, *Libre dels Escachs*. None of these books bears that title.

²⁴⁰ The doubt regarding Torquemada's authorship of the famous *Ingenio*, which must have been printed in 1547, becomes greater if we consider that this would have been his first published book. As we saw earlier, in his first book from 1553 (*Los Coloquios Satiricos*) he mentions the game of chess, but not the game of draughts, which is very strange if he were the only author in the world that, just a few years before, had written a book on draughts. The mystery surrounding the book from 1547 grows, decisively affecting its author or compiler.

the entire world. In his description of problem 26, he wrote the following²⁴¹: “another one that ends in a draw, although in the book printed long ago in Valencia it is listed as a win”

Ruiz Montero, with this enigmatic phrase -as he does not name the author of the book nor the date of publication- seemingly proves the publication of Torquemada’s book: the words long ago and Valencia necessarily lead us to him. Valencia is the only city in the world where a book on draughts had been published before (1547) and the words “long ago”, in a 16th century context, could well refer to a period of 44 years²⁴².

Following Dr. Westerveld’s research establishing a link between the books by Timoneda and Torquemada, the reference to the mysterious book could be the definitive proof of the relationship between these two draughts books. In other words, the problem that Ruiz Montero mentioned should appear in the Timoneda book, and then the question would be solved definitively.

However, we have two basic obstacles. First, Timoneda was a known plagiarist who appropriated in his work texts written by others. His book of draughts could be based on various other sources, especially taking into account the enthusiasm felt in Valencia towards this game. Therefore, he could have taken some problems, but not all of them, from Torquemada and from other sources. Something similar happened in Chess literature: Lucena almost certainly²⁴³ took 96 problems from Vicent for his collection of 150 problems. Damiano, in

²⁴¹ Ruiz Montero, Pedro (1992). *Libro del Juego de las damas*, vulgarmente nombrado el marro. Historical and biographical study by Govert Westerveld. p. 91.

²⁴² Another piece of evidence along these lines is that Ruiz Montero himself said he had played the game for 7 or 8 years. Lacking a long tradition, the words “long ago” seemed, therefore, sufficient to describe the time period which separated both books, corresponding to at least a generation of players. That is, the authors were not contemporaries as far as playing the game was concerned.

²⁴³ A solid study by Y. Averbach from 1985 proves it. In Spanish, his work was published under the title *El misterio del libro perdido*. *Revista Internacional de Ajedrez* (February 1993 and March 1994).

turn, published 70 problems from Lucena's book, which must have been copied from Vicent. Neither Lucena nor Damiano cited a source. In those days, plagiarism was not associated with a lack of ethics²⁴⁴ as it is today. The second obstacle comes from the fact that several problems from Timoneda's book have been lost since it was described in 1904 by Dr. Cárceles²⁴⁵. In these cases where misfortune consistently prevails, it almost seems like there is an intentional will behind it.

But, let's get back to the case of Ruiz Montero and the book printed long ago in Valencia. Ruiz Montero says²⁴⁶:

"...you must go back to the strategy I mentioned before, because, by force, you must give up a piece, to get it out of the middle row," and he adds, *"but if you do not give it up and do the moves I will address here,"* and then he develops problems 26 and 26A without surrendering the piece. In order to find the enigmatic problem that the history of draughts so direly needs, we will make the following considerations, taking into account the literal text by Ruiz Montero and the resulting analyses:

The Literal Interpretation

²⁴⁴ See: En pos del incunable perdido (2001). Chapter 3: "*Lucena y Vicent. ¿Dos libros diferentes?*" addresses the topic that concerns us here. The idea of publishing a seemingly better work by merely adding problems or texts to the ones at hand was not considered illegal or illegitimate like it is today.

²⁴⁵ Cárceles spoke of 53 compositions in Timoneda's book and today there are only 48. Since Cárceles refers to Antonio Mirón del Castillo in a different section, it is clear that the eight problems by Mirón are additional. The words of Cárceles seem to indicate that he knew the eight problems: "At the end of Juan Timoneda's book, eight Moves were published, some of which reveal true ingenuity." Therefore, the 1635 book contained 61 problems, of which 11 compositions (5 by Timoneda and 6 by Mirón) are unknown today. Our opinion, formulated within the context of the present study, is that the 1547 book also contained the problems by Mirón del Castillo. The possibility, therefore, that one of the lost problems was that of the "bringing out the pawn" is very likely.

²⁴⁶ Ruiz Montero, Pedro (1992). Libro del Juego de las damas, vulgarmente nombrado el marro. Historical and biographical study by Govert Westerveld. p.92.

I. It seems that Ruiz Montero does not analyse the problem of the mysterious book, rather he suggests that if at the beginning, the whites gave up a piece to take the main diagonal, he would get to (“you must go back to”) Torquemada’s problem. According to this interpretation, neither the problem or its analysis can be found in Ruiz Montero’s book.

2. For Ruiz Montero, the problem is erroneous because it leads to a draw, although in the old book it was acknowledged as a win.

3. Although the problem is not provided, Ruiz Montero does give us solid evidence to reconstruct it, such as:

Blacks (since in Timoneda the blacks occupied the lower part of the board) had 3 pieces (two dames and a pawn* in square 2), and a dame has already been surrendered to take over the main diagonal.

4. A black dame, therefore, occupies the main diagonal.

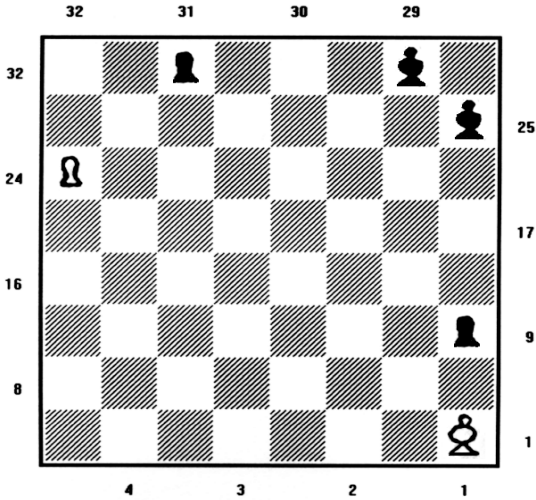
5. Whites must have, like in Ruiz Montero’s problem, a dame and a pawn. The pawn has to be in square 9 (for the mirror effect regarding the white pawn, which occupies square 24 in Ruiz Montero). Did a problem like this one exist in Timoneda? We see that it is a question of the famous topic of “bringing out the pawn”, a fact which confirms the following.

Contextualized interpretation:

It is the most probable answer. When Ruiz Montero says you must go back to the strategy I mentioned before, he could also be referring to the fact that he himself had analysed some problems before, specifically problem 24, where the requirements for the number of pieces and the occupation of the main diagonal are fulfilled. Problem 24 is the key move we must go back to. In support of this interpretation is the fact that it would no longer make sense to analyse the outcome of problem 26 because it can be reduced to a key move already discussed. Another point in its favour is the comment by Ruiz Montero made in problem 24: “because I discovered this strategy which great players used to win up until now.”

In the entire book, Ruiz Montero only refers to a previous practice in problems 24 and 26, a situation that he experienced as a player and

tried to correct. This interpretation would still imply that the old book included the famous subject “bringing out the pawn”, which would then be the oldest extant problem, rather than the one thought until now to have occupied that position²⁴⁷.



Problem 26 by Ruiz Montero

Ruiz Montero’s book unmistakably clarifies what he meant when he said “you must go back to the strategy I told you about before”, seeing as further on in problem 27-1 he uses an identical phrase, which does not allow for confusion and refers to the preceding problem, number 27. The phrase here says “and we go back to strategy of before”. It is the same phrase.

²⁴⁷ As we saw in the Chapter on draughts (p.48), the historian Kruijswijk attributes this position (26) to Antonio de Torquemada, as the author (?) of the first book on Draughts, in 1547. Since only the end of the 1547 book remains, according to traditional opinion, this would then be the oldest endgame in the history of draughts. But, strictly Speaking, this was not the case, since the subject that the old book (probably Timonedas, 1547) really dealt with was the development of endgame 24, the “bringing out the pawn”. In the old book this was not directly presented, but with the outlook of problem 26, and after a few moves (where the queen is sacrificed), it reaches problem 24, victoriously carrying out the “bringing out the pawn”.

Therefore, in the mysterious case he is referring to problem 24. I think there is no room for doubt. But now we must solve an even greater mystery. This problem, together with number 26, is the only one that refers to an earlier practice and teaching, which came long before Ruiz Montero, since he wrote: “because I discovered this strategy that great players used to win up until now”. Problem 24, therefore, was also known long before. Let us continue with a close analysis focusing on problem 24. Ruiz Montero announces that he is going to demonstrate how the outcome of the mysterious game must be a draw, as opposed to the unanimous opinion of the earlier maestri.

We expect him to explicitly refute or correct the mysterious problem (he announces this: I find this is a draw without remedy, I will make you understand). Is this what we find?

- Ruiz Montero suggests that it is better to sacrifice a piece and gain control of the main diagonal.
- However, he analyses a minor variant in problem 26, in case a piece is not sacrificed. But there we do not find either the refutation or any commentary on a possible correction. Simply, they are clear variants that lead to a draw.
- Therefore, the dilemma is solved in problem 24, where a refutation is made by indicating that this strategy would result in the opponent's Victory (“because if it is allowed out and then charges on the pawn, stretches it and gives it to pieces to capture, he wins”; and further on, “and don't place it on number 18 because it will be lost”)
- The connection, regarding the solution between problems 24 and 26, is obvious and both of them evoke, in fact, the mysterious book.

CONCLUSION:

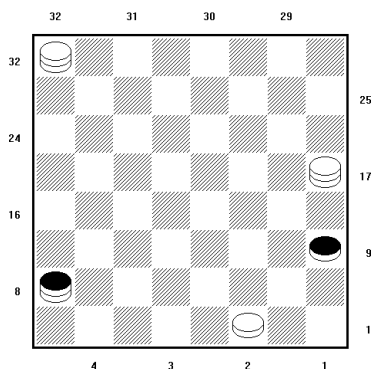
The mysterious Valencian book probably had a problem with a presentation identical to Ruiz Montero's number 26, which explains why Ruiz Montero prefers to evoke the mysterious book here and not

in problem number 24 (where he also brings it up, although with the opposite colours, as we can verify with a thorough study).

- The solution in the old book used the main variant (problem 24): sacrificing the piece, and gaining control of the main diagonal (this is the starting point for problem 24 and Ruiz Montero's true contribution to the earlier lesson), which is confirmed by the comments (and omissions) of problems 26 and 24. In other words, there was a transposition from problem 26 to problem 24.

- It is very likely, though not as certain as the above, that the old book indicated a win similar to the two winning variants that Ruiz Montero alluded to. This would imply that the old book also contained the *forced dame end game*²⁴⁸, and this does take place in Timoneda's book, where it is called *the dead man's strategy*. This name in itself shows that Timoneda's book contains the oldest compositions in draughts literature. Knowing that the old book included the *forced dame* indicates that they were already working with outcomes that could be reduced unto themselves, like the bringing out the pawn.

- What is important about the mysterious book is that it included, as we have explained, the famous problem "bringing out the pawn", which therefore indicates that it is older than was thought up to now.



Ruiz Montero's problem 24 (Bringing out the pawn)

²⁴⁸ This simple and inevitable deduction, which to our knowledge has not been made up to now, indicates that we know another endgame from the old Valencian book.

In Timoneda's Book there are many compositions with the same number of pieces as in the mysterious one (which indicates a desire to systematise this outcome). It is very possible that some of the missing problems²⁴⁹ had the starting position of Ruiz Montero's problem 26 which, through the suggested solution, is transposed²⁵⁰ to Ruiz Montero's problem 24²⁵¹.

All this sheds light on the fascinating subject of early draughts literature, although its mystery has still not been definitively solved.

Timoneda's book and its relationship with the first manuscripts and publications on modern chess

When Govert Westerveld gave me a copy of the mysterious book by Timoneda, I quickly understood that there were two reasons for seriously studying this work and the circumstances surrounding its

²⁴⁹ We do not know the circumstances that contributed to the Toulouse edition of 1635, nor in what condition the 1547 book arrived there. At some time, some compositions could have been lost.

²⁵⁰ Here is an explanatory example regarding the solution to this mysterious passage. The problem of the old book was formally presented (diagram) like Ruiz Montero's 26, but when the solution was given, it was different, for example:

1...25-21 2. 1-23 21-18 3. 23-10 18-13 4.10*17 29-19 5.17-3 9-5 6. 3-17 5-2, reaching the same position as problem 24, with the opposite colours (ha de venir la treta que tengo dicho atrás). Here the mysterious book continued with the solution that led to a win and that Ruiz Montero corrected. In Timoneda the black had the bottom part of the draughts board and was therefore usually the strong opponent or winner. The fact that precisely problem 26 in Ruiz Montero gives the black the material superiority is additional proof that Timoneda, or his source, had the key move of "bringing out the pawn". Ruíz Montero's text supports our deductions, because he, who had been playing draughts for 7 or 8 years, spoke of a long tradition before his time regarding judgements and analysis about the key move "bringing out the pawn", a comment which by itself, without further inquiries, already tells us with near certainty, that this was included in the old Valencian book.

²⁵¹ Therefore, not only do we know the form or principle of the problem from the old book (26, Ruiz Montero), but we also know the proposed solution (24, Ruiz Montero)!

publication. In addition to being an unsettling book for the literature on draughts, since it quickly becomes obvious that it must be the earliest book (at least in its production²⁵²) and, as we have seen, its relationship to Torquemada's 1547 book now seems irrefutable, there was still another aspect of this book that has been ignored, which links

²⁵² What were the circumstances surrounding Timoneda's involvement in the book, in 1547 or before?

There are only two possible hypothesis:

a) Timoneda decided to publish a book on *marro de punta* in 1547, his first year as a book dealer, based on some texts or a book (or both) that he had acquired. If it had only been a book, it would have had to be printed in Valencia before 1520. This would explain the age of the texts, diagrams, pieces, terms, the concept of the book (problems), and the name of the game ("*marro de punta*"). This book was based on a chess text from the same period 1495-1518. Ruling out Valle as an early author (1547) on draughts, there is no evidence whatsoever for the existence of a book earlier than 1547 (the only indication that would suggest this would be the age itself of the texts in Timoneda's book). After the Torquemada affair, which carried on throughout centuries, we will not take a single step in that direction. Conclusive proof would be necessary.

b) Timoneda met a Valencian draughts player who had composed problems over the years, basing them on the structure of a chess book, which as we will see, must have been Vicent's *incunabulum*. Or he simply acquired the draughts book in a business transaction. Due to Timoneda's innate business sense, he predicted that a book on "*marro de punta*" would be very successful in Valencia, a city where so many people played this game. He then decided to begin his publishing enterprise with this attractive project. At the time he was preparing the edition, he used the book on chess that had inspired the MS. The connection between the texts and diagrams in reference to chess nearly eliminate any other hypothesis (there is the possibility that the MS. included the diagrams). He/They decide -to print the book as was. Could Timoneda have been a draughts player and have written some of the compositions? Proof would be necessary to continue that line of research. For example, a good starting point would be the letter to Iñigo de Losca where the author confesses his fondness for "*marro de punta*" (Was it Timoneda himself?). After all, in the 1635 book Timoneda appears as the sole author (later with the problems by Mirón), although his skill at appropriating other people's texts and publishing them is documented. A book made up exclusively of problems, in Chess as well as draughts, is by this fact alone, older than one using opening theory. At the same time, as we have seen in reference to Lucena's book, the author of a book of problems would likely be a compiler, fundamentally bringing together the past experience of the game and the latest achievements and innovations. He must then be able to organize the material and add something of his own invention. Was this the task carried out by Timoneda?

it to a book on modern chess, and therefore, to the specific technique of the early texts on modern chess.

Timoneda's book must be earlier than any other work on draughts. Therefore, while he was composing it, he had to use a chess book as a point of reference. However, its parallel with chess goes beyond the formal aspects of the book (diagrams, pieces, cataloguing, etc.) and affects its very structure, in such a way that if the problems (or *partidos*, as Timoneda calls them) were not solved according to the rules of draughts, it would seem we are presented with a chess problem. This question calls for serious investigation, whose repercussions might also be very important for the history of chess and the birth of modern chess. I shall present below the conclusions of this study:

1. The text by Timoneda uses Spanish from at least the mid-16th century, but what is more revealing is that it uses certain technical terms and expressions which unexpectedly situate us in the period when modern chess was introduced (together with draughts), more specifically, in the last two decades where old Arab-medieval chess and modern chess coexisted in the literature: 1495-1512 (1520 at the latest).

For this reason we have analysed the Timoneda book, comparing it with the following works and printed documents on modern chess:

- *Llibre dels jochs partits dels Schachs*. Francesch Vicent, Valencia, 1495. We now know many things about this book, especially as a result of my research. The book had diagrams and contained 100 problems, which were organised according to the number of plays required to solve the problem.

Lucena's book had a similar structure, in form and -subject matter.

- *Arte de Ajedrez*, Lucena, printed in Salamanca in 1497.
- The MS. from El Escorial, from the beginning of the 16th century.
- The MS. of the Casanatense Library of Rome, dated 1511.
- The book by Damiano, whose first edition is from 1512 and second from 1518.

2. All of the above texts are collections of problems, surprisingly like Timoneda's book, the only one in the draughts bibliography. The book by Ruy López in 1561 inaugurates a new phase, showing a preference for treatises on openings to the detriment of problems, which is consistent with the development of modern chess.

Every problem in the Timoneda book is accompanied by its respective diagram, just like in the chess books and manuscripts. When we compare Timoneda with Damiano, the Roman MS. and Lucena (and, by association, Vicent), the parallel is striking: one diagram is featured per problem and page. The books are visually very similar. In all the analysed texts, including the manuscripts, the problems begin in a typical chess-book fashion. Most of Lucena's problems begin with this formula: "The White lead and say they will checkmate the Black..." We also see this in Damiano: "Say the White to the black we'll checkmate you in two moves." Timoneda²⁵³ also uses these opening

²⁵³ All these features and characteristics that we see in Timoneda, were also used in the two compositions that we have out of the original eight by Antonio Mirón del Castillo. In other words, Mirón's texts are as old as Timoneda's. They are therefore completely innovative for the game of draughts and archaic where Chess is concerned. Reputed draughts bibliographers have indicated the possibility that this was the little book that Ricard Twiss mentioned in his book *Miscellanies*, from 1805, published in 1610. In my opinion the Mirón texts do not seem to correspond, without additional proof, with the little of the 1610 book (and it would be small, indeed, with only eight compositions), as they are obviously contemporary with Timoneda's texts. Furthermore, a first edition of Mirón del Castillo's problems seems doubtful, precisely because of the text in Timoneda:

"Followed by eight key moves now newly brought to light by Antonio Miron y del Castillo". In the 16th and 17th centuries it was fairly common to find the adverb "newly" in similar phrases, but it actually did not refer to the work being published, but rather made a connection with the material that the work dealt with. A few examples will make this clear:

In Ruy López's book, the princeps edition in Spanish (1561), we see on the cover: "Composed now newly by Ruy López de Sigura" In the *Dechado de la vida humana*. *Moralmente sacado del juego de Axedrez* (1549), we find something similar: "Now newly translated by the graduate Reyna".

In the draughts bibliography there are similar cases. In -a MS. belonging to Víctor Cantalapiedra, author Diego de Argomedo in 1658, refers to the book by Ruiz

words, although they are spurious for draughts books. Por example, Timoneda says, “Say the black to the white, I’ll take the lead and win the game.”

3.This brings us to the conclusion that a work on chess existed when Timoneda’s book was published, and was Timoneda’s inspiration. This fact would also date it from the period discussed above. But there are many more similarities.

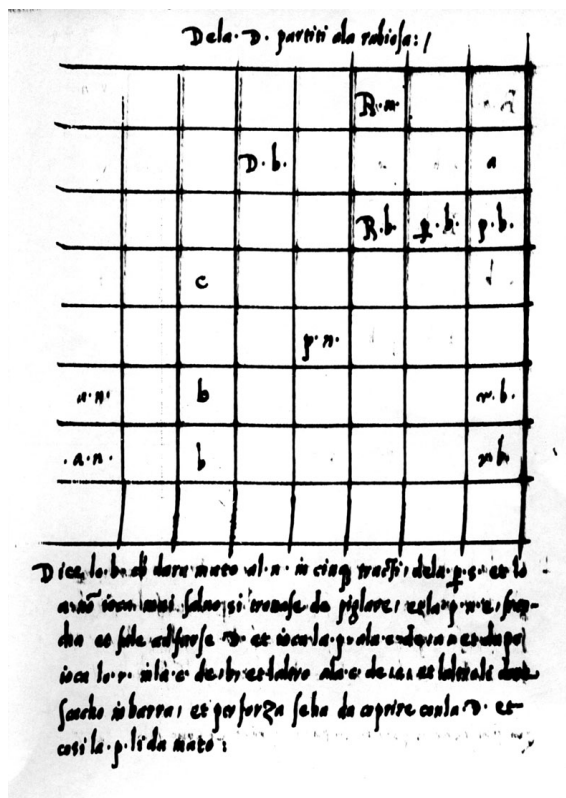
4.The diagrams are presented in a very similar way. They are decorated like those in the book by Lucena, but also like the ones in Damiano’s. Interestingly, the design of the pieces used by Timoneda is more similar to the second edition of Damiano’s (1518), which is less elaborate than in the 1512 edition. In the post-1524 Damiano editions, the diagrams did not have any decorations. On the other hand, the decorations look more like those in Lucena’s.

Montero, which he transcribed, making the comment “Now newly reduced”.. In each of these cases, we are told that the book we have in our hands contains a new approach to the material in question. In fact, instead of suggesting a second edition, it indicates, in most cases, the contrary. The reason why it is pointed out is the certainty of finding something completely new.

An idea that Govert Westerveld has recently suggested would help clear up many aspects of this passage. If the book from Toulouse (1635) had been a private commission by a more or less affluent bibliophile, that would explain the book’s rarity and all the strange circumstances surrounding its publication, and especially, the age of the texts. The book was printed as it is known today (or perhaps with the lost compositions), remaining faithful to the original. Were the problems of Mirón del Castillo in Timoneda’s 1547 book? With time and in-depth research we can find the right answers to many of these questions.

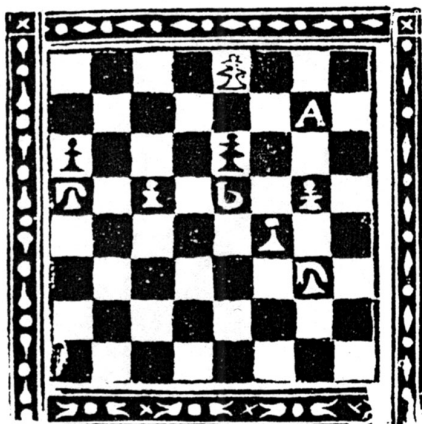


A party game in the book of Lucena (1497), a full page whose resemblance to the book of Timoneda is remarkable. Note the use of the letters to the solution, the parallelism in the statement, which also occurs in the heading stating that chess is a game of the Lady, compared to MS. Rome in 1511, of a similar situation.



One problem of the MS. Casanatense Library of Rome (1511), firstly documented in Italy with modern chess. Each problem takes a page that is as it should occur in the book of Vicent (1495), as we demonstrated that the author of the MS. Joannes Chachi had the book of Vicent as a base, not the book of Lucena.

CJocho de doi trati.
 Xo biancho alo negro dara scacho mato in doi
 trati ne piu ne meno. prima dela dona in. a. 7 al
 secondo trato sera scacho mato con ciffa in. b.

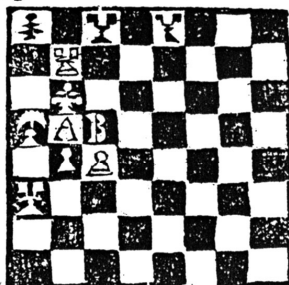


CDe el biancho al negro che li dara mare in
 doi lances ni mas ni menos. el premier lance es
 o. la dama in. a. y dela misma in. b. y sera mare.

Detail of a problem in the edition of the Damiano book of 1518 (2nd). In general this edition is easier ornamentally and especially in the development of the pieces it remembers the book of Timoneda. Thus we rule out that this is the book of chess on which Timoneda based himself.

Giochi de li partiti alla rabiosa.

Dice il biancho al negro che li dara mato in doi tratti ne piu, ne mancho, il biancho giocara prima la pedona in. A. e fera mato il negro p forza, perche se dara scacho mato in discoperto, e se il biancho giocasse altramente non se daria, perche il negro giocara il Rocho in. B.



Juegos de partidos de la Damma.

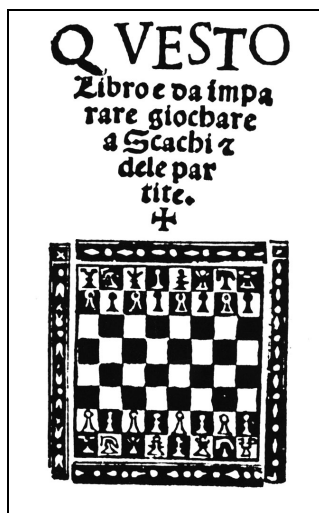
Dize el blanco que li dara mate in dos lances, ni mas ni menos, el blanco iuega primer el peó in. A. y al segundo lance es mate in descubierta y si iugasse in otro modo non se daria, por que lo negro iugaria su Roque in. B. y se cubteria con el, y esta es la defenfa.

15

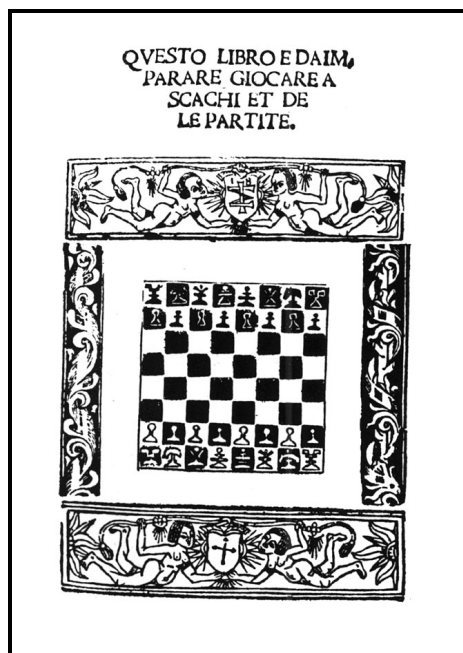
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One problem of the book of Damiano in a later edition (c. 1530). It is perceived that we move away from the source (and time) of the book of Timoneda. The decorations have disappeared and the pieces are more sophisticated.

5. The pieces in Timoneda's book, which are chess pieces -pawns and queens- are more reminiscent of Damiano than of Lucena because of their simplicity, but yet they are not the same as Damiano's. Were the pieces in the lost book by Vicent like these? We know that because they were not silhouetted they were blurry when printed on the black squares. Timoneda logically did not have this problem since only the white squares were used. It is very probable that the book of reference was the one by Vicent (1495), since both were from the same city, Valencia.

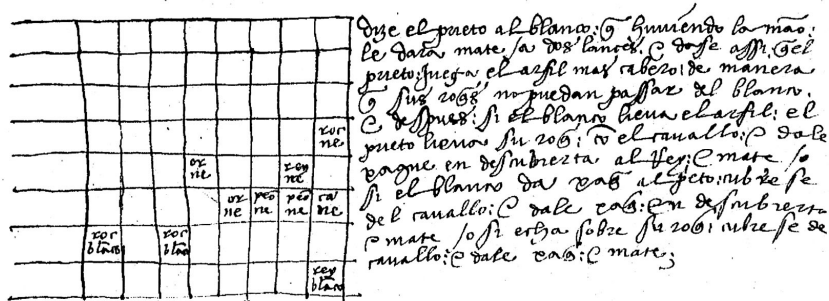


Cover of the 2nd edition of Damiano (1518). Here pawns closely resemble those of Timoneda.



Cover of the first edition of Damiano's book (1512). Both pieces and decorations are more sophisticated.

6. In Lucena, Damiano, the MS. from El Escorial, and Timoneda letters are used to indicate the solution to the problems. The language used is practically the same, and is much more similar than, for example, that used by Ruy López (1561), therefore it must be from at least the first part of the 16th century (Timoneda = Torquemada, 1547).



MS. of the Royal Library of the Monastery of El Escorial (early sixteenth century). Detail of one of the problems. Notice how the language and wording used overlap those of Timoneda. The anonymous author of this remarkable collection of party games does not seem to have known the works of Vincent and Lucena, but does seem to have known the art and language of the period of introduction of the new chess. (1495-1512)

There are, however, other peculiarities that are related to chess, which reveal the true status of Timoneda's book, or point to an even greater mystery:

7. He used chess vocabulary, spurious to the draughts lexicon, which was only employed during a very specific time. Por example, Timoneda used the words barra and barra larguera (rows) to describe the movement of the pieces on the board. This term is frequently used in Lucena, for example, to refer to the queening of the pawn. "...upon arriving to the barra (row) of his opponent's leing he has the strength of a queen". This word had been used for at least a century before, as is demonstrated by its inclusion in the Cessolis family MS. (preserved at the Gerona cathedral, dating from late-14th century to early- 15th). The following paragraph from this MS. Also regards the pawn's ultimate move: "axí, que si los pehons, con pugen a la barra del Rey." This word was abandoned soon, as we can see in a passage from Ruy López' treatise: "no pueden caminar sino casa a casa hasta gue llegan a la ultima del adversario" ("they can only advance from square to square until they reach the last row of their adversary".) Ruy López

already used the word *líneas* (rows) for what was formerly known as *barras*. Note that, even before Ruy López, other expressions were used, which is very relevant as it confirms that the term *barra* had already fallen into disuse. In Dechado (1544), Reyna describes the queening of the pawn in this way:

“que cuando estos pequeños y abaxados en dignidad y reputacion, subiendo de grado en grado pueden venir y subir a los más alto, son estos peones hechos damas.”

(“these little ones, low in dignity and reputation, can go up step by step, and climb to the greatest height, these are pawns made queens.”)

8. This proves, almost without any need for further arguments, the fact that the Timoneda texts preceded the date when the Torquemada book is believed to have been published (1547), but this does not invalidate Dr. Westerveld’s theory that Timoneda based his work, at least partly, on the book which has been attributed to Torquemada up to now. Rather it also suggests that it contained even older compositions²⁵⁴.

9. The original name of the new game, *marro de punta*, is clearly reminiscent of the description of the move of the medieval bishop in Alfonso X the Wise (1283):

“El alferza anda a una casa en sosquino” (‘The fers goes to a diagonal square.’) “Los afiles saltan a tres casas en pospunta” (‘The bishops jump three squares diagonally’) “los cauallos saltan a tres casas contando las dos en derecho de si, e tomando la tercera en sosquino” (‘The knights jump three squares, counting the two to the right of itself, and one crossways.’) In my opinion, this is new and very meaningful. In other medieval texts many terms appear and could have been used -angle, angular, *traviesa*, *oblícuo*, *ladeado*, *torcido*, etc. The

²⁵⁴ Nowadays, it seems highly unlikely that Timoneda was born around the year 1517. The latest research shows that it was closer to 1490, as Professor Philippe Berger has pointed out in *Libro y Lectura en la Valencia del Renacimiento*. Edicions Alfons el Magnanim. Institució Valenciana d’Estudis i Investigació, Valencia, 1987. Volume 2, p. 543.

If this were the case, Timoneda would have been completely familiar with the development of the new powerful queen and it cannot be ruled out that he had acquired various manuscripts on “*marro de punta*”.

word *sosquino* (from *esquinae* ‘corner’) was reserved then for a short diagonal move of just one square. But when he described the move or jump of the old bishop (two steps and jumping pieces), he used the word *pospunta*. It is precisely this jump or move of the old bishop that can be linked to the capturing move in draughts. Definitely, the word *pospunta* was reserved for the chess move that was closest to the game of draughts.

10. Timoneda himself supplied us with a very valuable piece of evidence that shows not only that he used a chess text, but more importantly: there is a direct relationship between modern chess and the birth of draughts.

“And if Black had a queen from the beginning of the game, in order to position her well on the board, she should be placed in the g square”

This is a surprising sentence which reveals the connection between “*marro de punta*” (draughts) and modern chess. Timoneda proposes to start the game with a Dame from the starting position; therefore, like in chess, the player would have a Dame (or queen) from the start, and future ones would be a result of queening pawns, in a similar way to chess.

11. Now we will see a fact regarding chess that seems very significant to me, which also connects Timoneda’s book with those of Vicent, Lucena and Damiano. The typical terminology used in chess to name the problems is *juegos departidos*, *juegos de partidos* and *partidos*. This is even true in the book titles: Vicent (*Llibre dels jochs partits dels schachs*) and Lucena (*Arte de ajedrez con CL juegos de partido*).

In Dr. Westerveld’s study (1993) on Timoneda, he reports a reference to “*este partido quien lo armare*” (‘whoever set up this problem’). It is even more significant, that in his letter to Don Iñigo de Losca, we read, “*y así he procurado con la mayor diligencia que me ha sido posible el colegir algunas trechas, o por mejor dezir partidos de dicho juego*” (‘and thus I have tried, with as much diligence as possible, to collect some key moves or, rather *partidos* of said game’). To discuss compositions, he uses a common terminology, which was spurious to

draughts and, strictly speaking, only applied to chess in the first half of the 16th century!

There are two more indications that clearly link Timoneda's book to the texts on chess, during the period when old and modern chess coexisted in written texts, that is from 1495 to 1512.

12. There are at least two conditioned draughts problems (is there another similar case in draughts literature?). This was very typical in Lucena's book (for example, the famous Lucena checkmate, problem 103, where the queen is sacrificed in order to perform the well-known check by the knight, with the king smothered, stating the condition that "all the Black pieces are insured.") The problems with conditions appear, for example, on pages 23 and 41 in Dr. Westerveld's study on Timoneda²⁵⁵.



Diagram in the original book of Timoneda

²⁵⁵ Timoneda, Juan (1993). Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta, hecho por Juan Timoneda. Historical and biographical study by Govert Westerveld. pages 23 and 41.



Diagram in the book of transcription, 1993 (page 23)

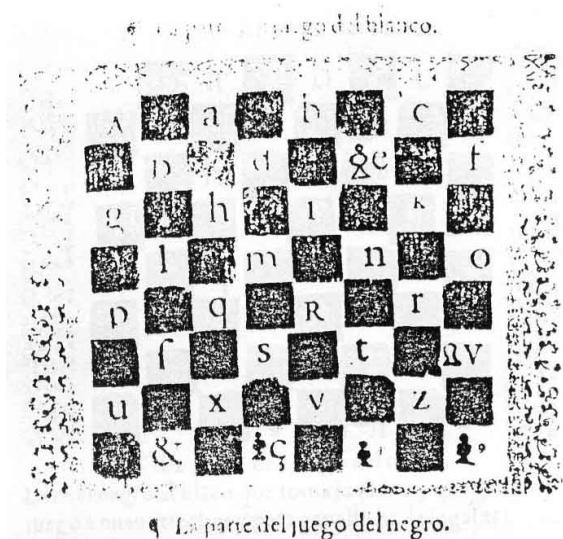
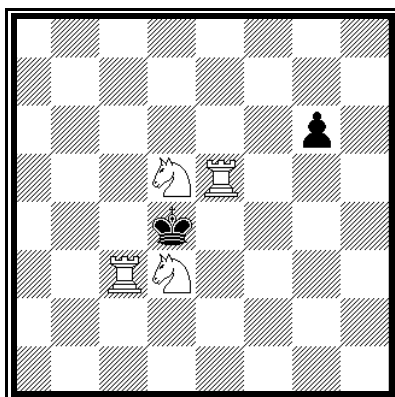


Diagram in the original book of Timoneda



Diagram in de book of transcription, 1993 (page 41)

13. We come across one of the so-called betting problems. These problems were typical in the Middle Ages and show how low Chess had stooped. There is still a trace of it in Lucena's book, as problem 70 demonstrates:



White. RC3, Re5 and Kd3 (the white King is not shown); Black Kd4 and g6. White mates in 3:
 1.Rg5 Ke4 2.Kb2 Kd4 3.RC4++

Lucena suggests to bet on the Black, changing the problem’s fortune: “...but if you don’t pay attention to the pawn and you keep the Black when the other takes the White , you could move the pawn one square and the mate becomes impossible.” He adds later “this is a good secret.”

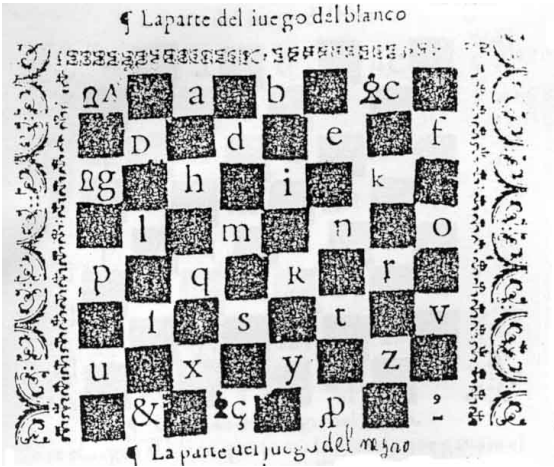


Diagram in the original book of Timoneda



Diagram in the book of transcription, 1993 (page 32)

On page 32 of Dr. Westerveld's book on Timoneda, we come across a surprising fact whose repercussions are important. There is a similar problem which reads: "and whoever sets up this problem must not disclose who moves first, for he has the liberty to start or let it pass." Not only are the terms noteworthy, but also the very fact of having "a betting problem in the game of draughts". This fact, in itself, implies how old this problem is and shows that, at least in its base, it is close to the early period of chess.

14. In our research²⁵⁶, conducted over a period of ten years, I provide decisive evidence to show that the 1495 book by Vicent was a manual of modern chess. Not only that, but the reason that it was published was to legitimise modern Chess, which had blossomed in Valencia some years earlier (c.1475). Timoneda, likewise, although he probably was not a draughts player, also gives us with genuine pride clear evidence that the new game of marro de punta was also from Valencia: "From the beginning I thought it pertinent to show how to play our marro de punta, the game being set with its twenty-four pawns, twelve white and twelve black, because perhaps someone might say: The person who wrote this book didn't know what he was doing, for he did not say from the beginning how to play, or how one can lose or win..." (page 16)²⁵⁷.

Lorenzo Valls gives another piece of evidence in his prologue²⁵⁸: "our draughts game." Also in the following book of draughts by Ruiz Montero, we find proof of the Valencian origins of the game²⁵⁹:

²⁵⁶ Garzón Roger, José Antonio (2001). *En pos del incunable perdido*. Francesch Vicent: *Llibre dels jochs partits dels schachs*. Valencia, 1495. Colección Bibliofilia, Biblioteca Valenciana, 2001.

²⁵⁷ Timoneda, Juan (1993). *Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta*, hecho por Juan Timoneda. Historical and biographical study by Govert Westerveld. p. 16.

²⁵⁸ Valls, Lorenzo (1597). *Libro del Juego de las Damas*, por otro nombre *Marro de Punta*, Valencia. Page of the Prologue. (Biblioteca del Palacio, Madrid).

²⁵⁹ Timoneda, Juan (1993). *Libro llamado ingenio, del juego de marro de punta*, hecho por Juan Timoneda. Historical and biographical study by Govert Westerveld. p. 42.

“I decided to publish what I have learned in Valencia, rather than anywhere else, because in this city and kingdom, more than in the other provinces and hinddorns that I have visited, I have seen and dealt with clever players. A clear indication, in my opinion, of the happiness of those talented people in the Valencian nation.”

In summary, Dr. Westerveld’s thesis, that Timoneda used the texts (or part) of Torquemada or the real author of the 1547 book, which according to the evidence we have pointed out, must have been Timoneda himself, is reasonable and convincing. But it is just as clear that there is a connection between the draughts book and the introductory period of modern chess. This implies two relevant facts:

1. That a chess book, with all its technical aspects and terminology, was present during the making and putting together of Timoneda’s book. The study we have done suggests that it must have been the lost (P) book by Vicent from 1495.

And, therefore,

2. That there was a clear connection, in terms of dependency, between the beginning of draughts and the recently-introduced modern chess. It was the same time frame, when the old way of playing had still not been completely eradicated.

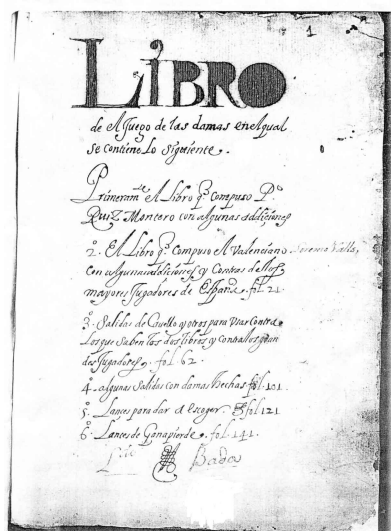
In my opinion, Dr. Westerveld’s theory concerning the Powerful Queen in both games and their connection, is definitively valid. This, together with the research we have conducted, situates the birth of modern chess in Valencia, where, once the queen was introduced, the birth of draughts²⁶⁰ took place a few years later. Both games share this formidable piece, la Dama-the dame, lady or queen-the Queen Isabella of the little chequered kingdom, the protagonist and beautiful inspiring reference.

²⁶⁰ Initially with the name “marro de punta”.

CHAPTER 26

Un nuevo manuscrito de damas

*The best camouflage of all is the plain and simple truth,
¡Because nobody ever believes it!*



A few years ago an old checkers manuscript of around 147 pages about checkers came into my possession in Andalusia. It did not surprise me, since I had always said that there should have been more manuscripts about checkers in Spain. The manuscript was allegedly written in the eighteenth century, we estimate around 1725, but contains the original texts of the seventeenth century, since we have found paragraphs relating to 1639 and 1644.

Mr. Bada's manuscript (1725?)

Until not so long ago I had not paid attention to the manuscript, but I recently devoted time to studying the contents in detail and saw interesting texts.

The cover tells us the content of the manuscript:

1. The book Pedro Ruiz Montero wrote an additions to this book, page 3;
2. Lorenzo Valls The Valenciano's book, as well as some additions and cons of these greatest players in Spain, page 21;

3. Cavello and others openings to use against those who know the two books and against great players, page 62;
 4. Some openings made with kings, page 101;
 5. Plays to give choices, page 121;
 6. Ganapierde plays, page 141;
- And thereafter the manuscript is signed by Mr. Bada.

Page 2

This page tells us in what place the black and white pawns must be positioned at the beginning of the game. An oddity is that in the seventeenth century symbols are already used to indicate whether the plays are good or bad. In this sense a big + is used for an addition in favor of the book and this addition will be found on the left, and the symbol † is used for showing that it goes against the book and will be found on the right of the page.

Page 3

When they talk about Pedro Ruiz Montero it says: "by the other name of Niño de Luzena". We know that in Alonso Guerra's book Pedro Ruiz Montero had the nickname "el marro." On the other hand, Lorenzo Valls called him "el Andaluz". All this implies that he should have been a famous man in his time playing checkers.

Page 5

We now see an addition to Pedro Ruiz Montero's game by Alonso Guerra, implying that Guerra is a post-1591 author.

Page 26

We see Mr. Alonso Guerra at least twice here

Page 55

He mentioned an author whom we cannot decipher:

"taking 5. Famous (playings) of R° Alonso, read 115 of the booklets"

Page 56

Canalejas is mentioned

Page 58

We find checkers related terms like:

"King to king opening against the *virol* of D. Baltasar"

"Another one from Cabello the *virol*"

Page 62

King to king barter openings by Mr. Alonso Guerra.

Lorenzo Valls is mentioned

Page 74

Alonso Guerra in favor of Lorenzo Valls?

Page 92

The author of the manuscript implies that there is another book or manuscript when he says:

"Mr. Baltasar opening unlike the 12 mine, page 74 plane 2".

Page 94

Unlike the 6th of Montero and Valls opening of Alonso Guerra.

Page 116

Juan Garcia Canalejas' name is mentioned again

Page 139 with the date of 1637

The important thing here is that we get an already pretty close date to Lorenzo Valls' book from 1597.

The real way of the emerging pawn (saque de peón) that wins just against everything seen and written here; my own work on May 25, 1637.

Page 139 with the date of 1644

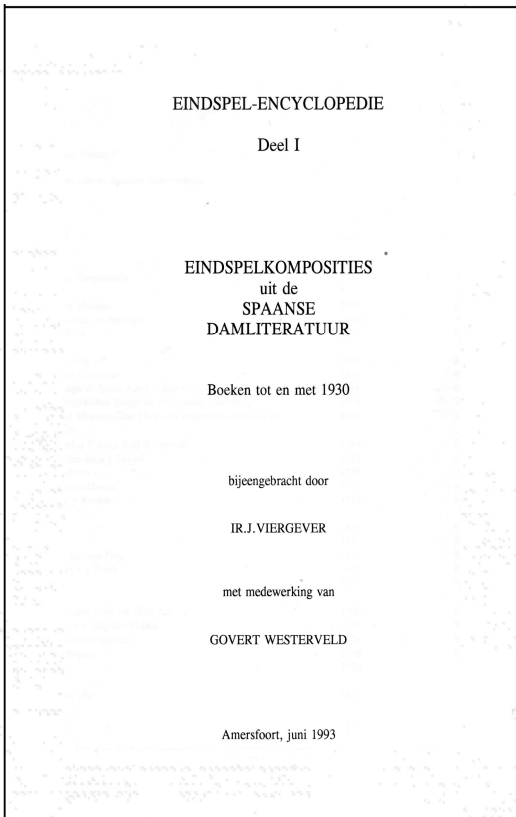
This page comes with the aforementioned plays and thus I have gone against the common doctrine of all players giving this playing as a forcefully-won tie. It is none but tab. Thi playing was discovered again on September 5, 1644.

Page 148

This page states that the author Dr. Paul Cecina Rica y Fergel wrote a checkers book in 1718.

Players of that time

We cannot pinpoint a date with certainty, but it meant to refer to players who were active during the period between 1595 and 1725. Those were:



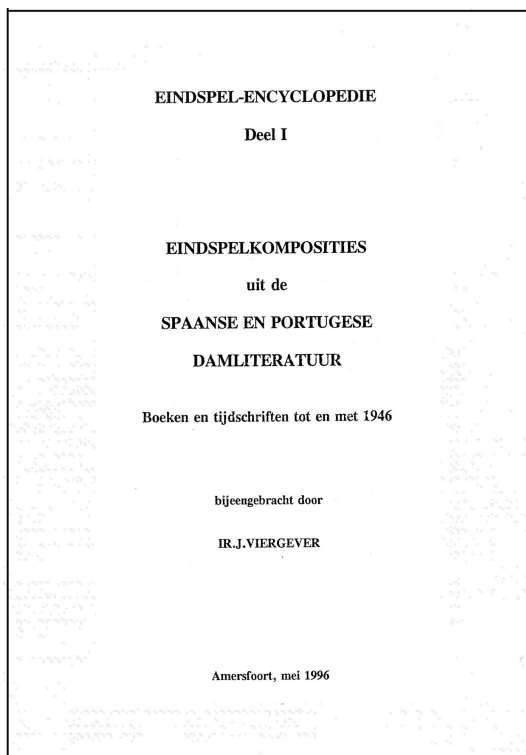
El valenciano Biçarro; Cabello; Carillo; Contreras; Antonio de Fonseca; Gabriel de Santa Anna; Francisco Garcia Serna; Juan Garcia Canalejas; Francisco Granados; Alonso Guerra; Matheo Gutierrez; el sevillano; Hidalgo; el Mallorquin; Diego de Morales; Morillo; Diego Ortiz; Diego Pacheco; Pallares; Mr. Baltasar Ribas Castro; Geronimo Ruiz, el Alferes; Pedro Ruiz Montero, niño de Luzena; Segura; Diego, el soldado; (Mr.) Uveda and Lorenzo Valls.

Viergever's book, 1993

Opening names

In the seventeenth century there was a habit of joining the names of players to the openings in checkers. Thus we find:

Cabello's opening; Diego Morales' opening; Navarro's opening; Diego Pacheco's opening, Pallares' opening, Rabanal de Roja el sevillano's opening. and Mr. Segura's opening.



Mr. Bada's manuscript gives much more information about the players than Canónigo's manuscript which was written around 1750, since it has Padrino's compositions. We know the date thanks to Ir. Viergever's work who at the same time got in touch with the historian Kruijswijk. We agreed with Ir. Viergever in 1992 to jointly write an encyclopedia of Spanish checkers finals in relation to the Spanish literature.

Viergever's book, 1996

We would provide data from the manuscripts, just like the entire Canónigo's manuscript (1750), Dr. Lafora's manuscript (1941) and a copy of Josef Antonio Garcia's book (1792); totally free and as

compensation we were promised that our names were to be written on the cover as contributors, as it is reflected on the 1993 cover sent to us as evidence.

Once a similar book, which included the Portuguese books, was completed, we saw that the 1996 cover no longer had our names. Due to the large expenses and many hours you have to devote to finding manuscripts, and taking into account the compensation received, one may wonder if you really get rewarded by providing information on Spanish checkers manuscripts. We thought it was necessary to show the world that Spain was the country of origin of checkers. Now as the Spanish origin, we hope, is shown in this book, this need no longer exists.

*Libro de Juego
de Damas.*

*En el que se ponen las
mas firmes calidades asi de
mano como de peote, muchas
lances sueltas y pernos y de
guerra y gana. Pedro.*

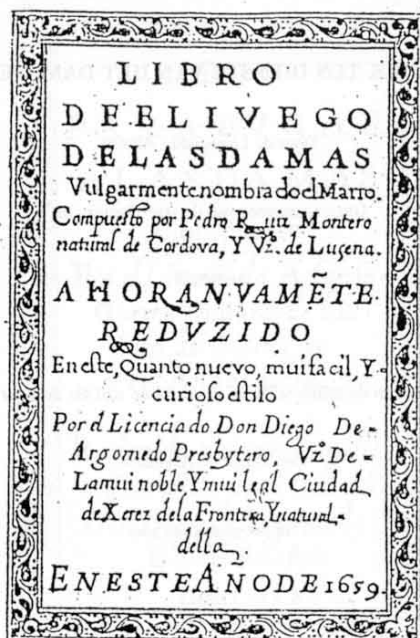
Compuesto

*Por un Canónico del Sacro
Consejo de la Ciudad de Gra-
nada, en conferencias que
tubo con los mejores jugadores
de España cuyos nombres
se expresan*

In the Canónigo de Granada's manuscript (1750) we see that it is simply dedicated to mentioning Pedro Ruiz Montero and Lorenzo Valls' books and the best players in Spain, not to mention the names of such players. It only gives us two names. One by talking about *Pallares'* opening and the other by calling up *Dr. Ribas'* one on page 352.

Going back to Mr. Bada's manuscript we see that the author Valle is not mentioned, as happens in Alonso Guerra's book (1595?) in possession of the bibliophile Victor Cantalapiedra Martín from Valladolid.

Manuscrito del Canónigo (1750?)

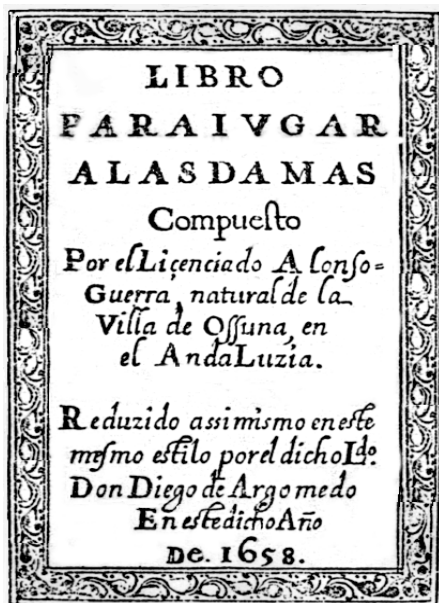


Manuscript held by the Bibliophile
V́ctor Cantalapiedra Martín

Diego de Argomedo, native to and priest of the city of Jerez de la Frontera, copied Pedro Ruiz Montero's book in 1659. In 1658 he copied Mr. Alonso Guerra's work, which Cantalapiedra estimated to have been written around 1595. Seeing the cover of this manuscript we see that Alonso Guerra was born in Osuna village. Happily we also found the name of Valle in Rodrigo Caro's book²⁶¹ which says: "About this game a Valencian wrote a book which I saw printed and read some years ago, and another one called Valle".

In the manuscripts the *Valencianis* also referred constantly and sometimes the name Lorenzo Valls can be found. Valle was a name that appeared 800 times in the phone book of Barcelona years ago, 400 times in the Valencia guide and 150 times in the Seville guide, so I think that the checkers player, Valle, should be from Valencia too.

²⁶¹ CARO, RODRIGO (1624) *Días geniales o lúdricos*, Manuscript. Editie van Jean-Pierre Etievre, Espasa-Calpe S.A., Madrid 1978. 2 volumes

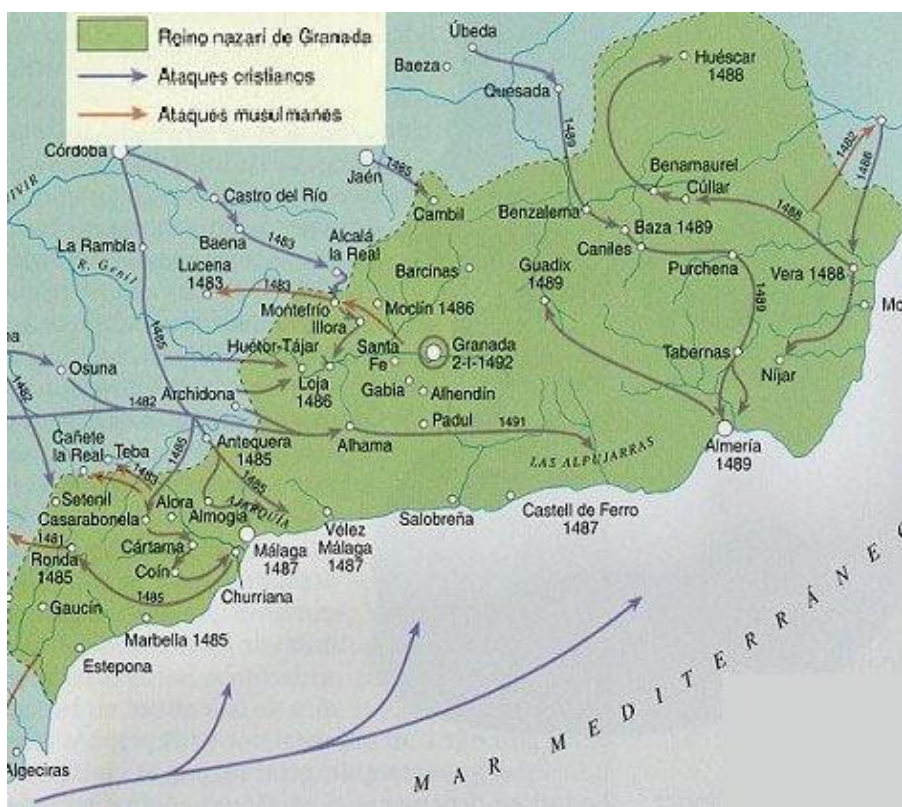


Fray Pedro de Covarrubias talked about chess in his book *Remedio de jugadores*, but did not mention checkers. The first areas of Spain where checkers was played as we were able to verify were Valencia and years later the area of Andalusia. Pedro Ruiz Montero, the author of a book about checkers, lived in Lucena, Alonso Guerra, the author of a checkers manuscript around 1595, lived in Osuna, and Alonso de Bonilla, the author of a checkers poem, lived in Baeza.

Alonso Guerra's famous manuscript
(Held by Victor Cantalapiedra Martín)

Lucena, Osuna, and Baeza are cities located within a circle with a 160km diameter of Granada, the last Muslim kingdom.

It is odd, but checkers was played a lot precisely in areas where there were many Moriscos in the sixteenth century. 30% of Valencia's population were Moriscos and the area of Granada and the surroundings were also full of Moriscos. Was the new game, andarraya, called *juego de marro* in Valencia as a way to Christianize the game?



Baeza, Lucena, and Osuna are close to the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada

CONCLUSION:

Bada's manuscript sets the author Alonso Guerra to a later date than Lorenzo Valls²⁶². The fact that in his own book Alonso Guerra does not mention Lorenzo Valls increases confusion about Valle (who is mentioned by Alonso Guerra) as an author. Rodrigo Caro also speaks of an author named Valle and a Valencian as well. If Valle had existed (if he was a different author from Lorenzo Valls), he can't have been too far from 1591, since Valle corrects an opening and the first texts of the checkers game have always been about problems and endings, but never openings. Valle therefore requires more study to reach a final conclusion.

Spain, more than any other country, has checkers manuscripts highlighting the high level of this game. The manuscripts mainly talk about the game during the 17th century. Murray, who thinks that France is the home of checkers, did not provide any checkers manuscripts from this country and there have not been any submitted in recent years either. Pretending that France is the origin of checkers without any proof of manuscripts or documentary evidence, only on the basis of some texts, disputes Murray's, Van der Stoep's, Kruijswijk's, and others' position.

Spain is the country of origin of the new powerful lady and therefore home of the checkers. No country has been able to present evidence dated before the 1500s. Spain has, since the game Andarraia [or Andarraya?] (novum) and Dama (novum) provides the evidence for

²⁶² The manuscript in the introduction states: "Cavello and others are used against those who know the two books and against great players, page 62, which may imply that Alonso Guerra has his ways out against Pedro Ruiz Montero and Lorenzo Valls. For this reason we think that it is at a later time than Lorenzo Valls. A detailed study of the manuscript can give us a definitive conclusion.

the invention of a game that would have been called "the checkers game" years later in Spain.



The Arabs playing chess

In 1492 after Spain finally defeats the Moors it makes sense to definitely change the chess rules and the andarraya games, and also abandon the alquerque games. The winner determines the new rules.

You cannot forget the fact that the checkers game (which formerly had several names) first became very popular in places with the Arab influence. We thought about this in Valencia where there was a population of about 30% of Moors and we also thought of towns like Osuna, Baeza, and Lucena, places near the famous city of Granada, where the Moors stayed until the war of Alpujarras which ended in

1571. From that moment deportation of about 50,000 people began from the kingdom of Granada towards the kingdom of Castile. This mass deportation within the peninsula was the prelude to the general ejection of the Moors from Spain, decreed in 1609.

To determine the origin of a game it is essential to know the history of a country, which many European historians could not do well because they did not master the Spanish language.

CHAPTER 27

Antonio de Nebrija

*Anything one man can imagine,
Other men can make real*
JULES VERNE

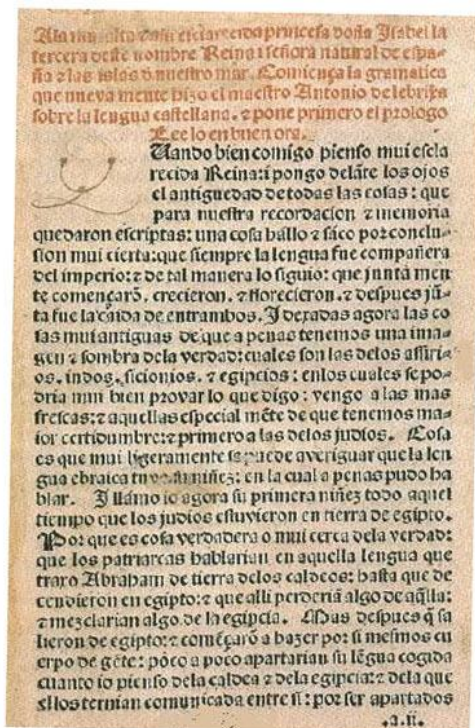
This author wrote a Spanish-Latin dictionary²⁶³ which was edited around 1493 - 1495. In this very dictionary we find the words *Alquerque* (*Calculus ludus*) **Andarraia** (*Calculus ludus*) and **Dama** is almost Miss (*Domina-ae*) and after the last words “Andarraia” and “Dama” comes in Latin “novum”. *Novum* carries the meaning that something new was happening. We have tried to find the same words in the Latin-Spanish dictionary²⁶⁴ from 1492, but we couldn’t find them there.

One may wonder why those words are not in the dictionary from 1492. The answer can be found in other places of this books and it is enough to say that Spain wasn’t prepared to share its greatness with the other nations of the world yet. The preparation of a whole dictionary can take 1 or 2 years and in 1490-1491 Granada hadn’t been conquered, the Americas hadn’t been discovered, and the Jewish hadn’t been expelled. All of this changed in 1492 and now the time had come to show the hegemony. From 1492 to 1504 i.e. from the conquest of Granada to the death of the Queen Isabella the Catholic huge changes

²⁶³ **NEBRIJA, ANTONIO DE** (1495) *Vocabulario español-latino* (printed in Salamanca cca 1493-1495). There is a special edition sponsored by the Royal Spanish Academy (Madrid, 1951; reprinted in 1989)

²⁶⁴ **NEBRIJA, ANTONIO DE** (1492) *El Lexicon hoc est dictionarium ex sermone latino in hispaniensem...* Salamanca.

took place which had a formidable impact on politics and the societies of the peninsular kingdoms.



Nebrija's Grammar, 1492

The Queen spent large amounts of money to support cultural life in Spain. The authors who knew the Queen and her weaknesses of being vain and liking honours and fame took advantage of that. One of them was the humanist Elio Antonio de Nebrija who adulated the Queen so that Spain would show its supremacy in the world.

Antonio de Nebrija, whose real name was Antonio Martínez de Cala and who also used the pseudonym de Lebrija, was a humanist and philologist born in Lebrija (Sevilla) in 1444 and who died in Alcalá de Henares in 1522. He studied humanities at the University of Salamanca and a year later at the age of 19 was studying philology and other subjects in Bologna. He returned to Spain in 1475 and served as

a Professor at the University of Salamanca teaching elocution and poetry. The following year he got Professorship in Grammar. Nebrija wrote several books which we are going to study next. Queen Isabella asked him to translate his book *Introductiones latinae* from 1481 into Castilian, so that religious women could «read them and understand them», which he did in 1485 under the title of *Introducciones latinas*. Next were *Lexicon latino-castellanum et castellano-latinum* (1492) and *Gramática castellana* (1492) among others. Queen Isabella asked him to translate into Latin the work of the monarchs' chronicler Hernán del Pulgar which involved the years 1468 – 1490 and was entitled *Chronica de los muy altos y esclarecidos reyes Catholicos don Fernando y doña Ysabel de gloriosa memoria*. The cardinal from Sevilla D. Juan de Zúñiga was Nebrija's protector in 1487 and 1502, times in which Nebrija wrote some other books. There in Gata and Zalamea Nebrija found a peaceful cohabitation of Christians, Jews, and Moors. Something habitual regarding his protector Juan de Zúñiga. Juan de Zúñiga's father was Don Álvaro (1408-1488) who was married to Doña Leonor Pimental, descendant of the Count of Benavente who had the best library of the 15th century. Therefore it is not odd that it was then that the Primera Academia and the Biblioteca Renacentista en Extremadura were created. Nebrija had already met Queen Isabella and she had shown interest in some of his work, such as Castilian Grammar, whose prologue he dedicated to Queen Isabella the Catholic. In the intro of this book Nebrija adulates the Queen and informs her about the need of Castilian, referring to the piece she had commanded him to do.

*“Because if it is not done in our language as it was done in the others, then it is in vain that your chroniclers and historians write and commend to immortality the remembrance of **your laudable works**, and we try to put into Castilian the peregrine and strange things, this cannot be a work of more than a few years. And one of the two things shall be necessary: either the remembrance of **your exploits** perishes with the language, or it peregrinates through the foreign nations since it has no local home to live in”.Because after they feel the great art of Castilian, which shall not be very difficult since it is the*

*language they already feel, when they put it into Latin there shall be no obscure thing which they will not consider too thin, mostly glimpsing at the Arte de la Gramática **which Your Highness commanded me to make**, transferring each line of the romance into Latin. For which it would not be a marvel to learn the Latin grammar, I am not saying a few months, but a few days and much better than when it was done in several years.*



Antonio de Nebrija

Nebrija's vision is prophetic because he intuited the imperial fate of Spain as the main power of the world. The dictionary saw the light of day on 18 August 1492 and Columbus hadn't yet discovered the Americas, which would happen on 12 October. In the following text Nebrija's visionary project on how the Spain of the Catholic Monarchs should be is appreciated:

"The third gain of this work of mine can be that when in Salamanca I gave the sample of this work to your royal majesty and you asked me what it could be used for, the very reverend father Obispo de Avila beat me to the answer; and speaking in my name he later said that your Highness should subjugate many barbarian villages and nations with peregrine languages, and thus they would have to admit the laws

which the defeater imposes on the defeated and along with those our language, then, through this my art they could learn it, as we now study the art of Latin grammar to study Latin”.

With the work *Gramática castellana*, written in Villanueva de la Serena or Zalamea de la Serena (Extremadura), Spain got 33 years ahead of Italy, 44 years ahead of Portugal, and 58 years ahead of France, where similar works took long to see the light of day.²⁶⁵ This comes to show how important Nebrija was to Spanish history and European philology. With these Nebrija’s political and visionary words where he states that the expansion of the language ought to be enforced the Queen must have thought of this wise prophetic man and the greatest exponent of Spanish humanism many times.

Grammar books in their corresponding countries.

| Año | Idioma | Autor |
|------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1492 | Español | Antonio de Nebrija |
| 1525 | Italiano | Giangiorgio Trissino |
| 1536 | Portugués | Fernao de Oliveira |
| 1550 | Francés | Louis Meigret |
| 1573 | Alemán | Albert Oelinger |
| 1586 | Inglés | William Bullokar |

Nebrija was linked to Salamanca for twenty-six years firstly as a student and later as a professor²⁶⁶. He was also linked to coastal lands under the patronage of D. Juan de Zúñiga, the last master of the Order

²⁶⁵ It is something to bear in mind with the early books of chess and checkers. The culture was promoted by the Queen thus causing the Spanish splendor of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that stunned the world. Thus the culture in Castilla had an advance of several decades over the rest of Europe which didn’t reach England, France, or the German states. Maybe only a few Italian states.

²⁶⁶ **OLMEDO, F.G.** (1944) *Nebrija en Salamanca (1475-1513)*, Madrid, Editora Nacional. Quoted by: **BECERRA PÉREZ, MIGUEL** (2000?) *Arcaísmos de localización preferentemente occidental en el léxico de Nebrija: un dato más en torno a las críticas de Valdés al Vocabulario*.

of Alcántara, for sixteen or seventeen years²⁶⁷. As a protégé of D. Juan de Zúñiga, years later Archbishop of Seville, Nebrija repeatedly visited La Serena and spent long periods especially in Zalamea whose academy he taught at, and in Villanueva. Nebrija was a man who quickly heard of new words. The word “canoa” is found²⁶⁸ in Nebrija’s dictionary from 1495. Some people argue that the dictionary is from 1493, but this sounds premature to me. Columbus discovered the Americas on 12 October, 1492 and returned to Puerto de Palos in Spain on 15 March 1493. It is unknown where he would get the data from so fast. We know he was a good friend of the Bishop of Avila and the Queen’s confessor Fray Hernando de Talavera who was appointed Bishop of Granada in 1492. Talavera appointed D. Diego Ramírez de Villaescusa - Doctor of Theology and Cánones - as Dean of the cathedral, a friend of Antonio de Nebrija’s. The Catholic Monarchs held him in very high esteem and only the death of prince D. Juan kept Queen Isabella from her intention of her son receiving Latin lessons from Nebrija. The Queen herself had formed in her court a centre for humanists. Beatriz Galindo had taught Latin to the Queen and in the Court they had tried to be advised by Italian humanists among whom were Lucio Marineo, Sicilian, and Pedro Mártir de Anglería²⁶⁹. Juan de Lucena would sarcastically say back in his day;

²⁶⁷ Regarding the relationship between Nebrija and D. Juan de Zúñiga y Extremadura see especially the studies by A. Rodríguez Moñino, *Historia literaria de Extremadura (Middle Ages and Catholic Monarchs)* +, *Revista de Estudios Extremeños*, V (1949), pp. 415-470; E. Segura Covarsí, *Nebrija y D. Juan de Zúñiga (the last master of the Order of Alcántara)*+, *Revista de Estudios Extremeños*, VI (1950), pp. 191-221; and *A new Renaissance court*+, *Cuadernos de Literatura*, VI (núms. 16-17-18) (1949), pp.147-181; y A. Fontán, *El primer humanista español: Antonio de Nebrija y sus relaciones con Extremadura*+, en *Homenaje a Enrique Segura Covarsí, Bernardo Muñoz Santano y Ricardo Puente Broncano*, Badajoz, Diputación Provincial, 1986, pp. 43-60. Quoted by: BECERRA PÉREZ, MIGUEL (2000?). *Arcaísmos de localización preferentemente occidental en el léxico de Nebrija: un dato más en torno a las críticas de Valdés al Vocabulario*.

²⁶⁸ **NEBRIJA, ANTONIO DE** (1495) *Vocabulario español-latino* (printed in Salamanca circa 1493-1495). Some authors claim that the dictionary was from 1493, others say 1494, but we have selected 1495.

²⁶⁹ Pedro Mártir de Anglería was friends with the Queen’s confessor Hernando de Talavera. In 1494 Mártir de Alegría was a bishop and was summoned in the court. Mártir de Anglería

“when the king played, they were all players: when the queen studied, we are now all students²⁷⁰”. We cannot forget about Cisneros who was another humanist. Cisneros, the protégé of Cardinal González de Mendoza who helped the crowning of Queen Isabella and whom she esteemed very highly. It was that cardinal who recommended Cisneros to the Queen as her confessor in 1492 when her other confessor Hernando de Talavera was appointed Bishop of Granada. Two years later Cisneros became the main councillor of the Queen when Cisneros was appointed member of the Franciscan Order for Castile.



**Isabella the Catholic
(Grenada stamp in 1992)**

However, what only a few mention and Professor Pedro Correa Rodríguez mentions and points out as most outstanding from Nebrija is the fact that he was a royal chronicler²⁷¹. In 1490 he was appointed

made friends with Columbus and we think Talavera heard from him a lot of things prematurely, which he would communicate to Nebrija.

²⁷⁰ **PAZ Y MELIÁ, A.** (1892) *Opúsculos literarios de los siglos XIV a XVI*, Madrid

²⁷¹ **CORREA RODRIGUEZ, PEDRO** (2003) *Cortesía de la Editorial Rialp*. Gran Enciclopedia Rialp, 1991. Spanish literature and Spanish language Professor Correa Rodríguez lists the following references:

BIBL.: There is no modern edition of his work. Castilian Grammar, recommended editions: the photopic by **WALBERG**, La Haya 1909; **1. GONZÁLEZ LLUBERA**, Oxford 1926; **J. ROGERIO**, Madrid 1931; and the facsimile by **P. GALINDO y L. ORTIZ**, 2 vol. Madrid 1946; *Nebrissensis bíblica*, ed. de **P. GALINDO y L. ORTIZ**,

royal chronicler and honouring this he wrote several works, such as *Belli Navariensis libra duo*, to justify the interventionist policy adopted by Ferdinand the Catholic regarding Navarra and the annexation of this kingdom. As Correa states, Nebrija was a philologist, a historian, a pedagogue, a grammarian, and a poet. With his uneasy personality Nebrija was as important to 15th century Spain as the humanist legions had been to Italy. He was the first renaissance Spanish man.

What historian Teresa Jiménez Cálvente writes²⁷² when she states that King Ferdinand, on the advice of Miguel de Almazán, appointed Antonio de Nebrija as regal chronicler seems even more accurate. The latter in his book *Divinatio in scribenda historia* thanks the King for choosing him instead of other foreign writers, alluding Lucio Marineo Sículo and Pedro Mártir de Anglería, with the following text (translated from Latin):

("I cannot cease to greatly esteem the judgement you have of myself, bright prince, because out of so many learned men you have selected me to write in Latin your immortal exploits").

Madrid 1950; Historia de la guerra de Navarra, ed. y pról. DUQUE DE ALBA, trad. J. LÓPEZ, Madrid 1953 (the eighteenth editions of the Introductions and the Dictionary are still recommended); la «Rev. de Filología Española» XXIX (1945) y «Emerita» XIII (1945) are dedicated to work about Nebrija to celebrate the 500th anniversary of his birth; J. B. MUÑOZ, Elogio de Antonio Lebrija, Madrid 1796; C. RODRÍGUEZ, Reformas del Arte de Nebrija, Santander 1920, 226-245; F. G. OLMEDO, Humanistas y pedagogos españoles: Nebrija (1441-1522), debelador de la barbarie, comentador eclesiástico, pedagogo y poeta, Madrid 1942; íD, Nebrija en Salamanca (1475-1513), Madrid 1944; íD, Nuevos datos y documentos sobre Nebrija, «Razón y Fe» 128 (1943) 121-135; J. BALAGUER, Las ideas de Nebrija acerca de la versificación castellana, «Bol. del Inst. Caro y Cuervo» I (1945) 558-573; J. CASARES, Nebrija y la Gramática castellana, «Bol. de la R. A. Española» 51 (1947) 335-367; R. B. TATE, Nebrija historiador, «Bulletin Hispanic Studies» 34, Liverpool 1957, 125-146.

²⁷² JIMÉNEZ CALVENTE, Teresa (2003) Enciclopedia Enciclonet en: www.enciclonet.com

Humanist Antonio de Nebrija's active contacts in Spain

| Antonio de Nebrija – chronicler of the Catholic Monarchs 1509 | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| | | |
| Matters of Castile | Nebrija's informers | Matters of Aragon |
| | | |
| The word Dama (in poetry meaning an unreachable woman) | Queen Isabella, through the court | The word Dama (in chess meaning a new powerful piece) |
| The word Andarraia, a game named in poetry by Juan de Mena in 1454 | Hernando de Talavera, his protector | Francesch Vicent's Chess Book in Valencia - 1495 |
| Lucena's Chess Book in Salamanca - 1497 | Juan de Zuñiga, his protector | |
| | University of Salamanca | |

All this means that relations with the court had always been excellent. Now it is clear why Nebrija could in his Spanish-Latin dictionary include words like “**cano**”, “**dama**”, and “**andarraia**” so fast. He had weekly or maybe even daily contact with the court. All of the court's new words quickly came to Nebrija! Therefore we see the link between the Catholic Queen and the words “dama” and “andarraya” once more.

Once the Americas were discovered Luis de Santángel and the poets of *Scachs d'amor* influenced King Ferdinand in 1493 to print a piece on modern chess. It was now time to show the world what the Spanish nation was made of by symbolising the Queen (dame) on the chessboard.

From 1493 onwards the Queen, free from the worries of war, indulged in activities that were very appreciated by her father, becoming a generous protector of all sciences and arts. Therefore in 1493 it was ideal for the king to convince his wife. It is supposed that Queen Isabella²⁷³ agreed on the implantation of a powerful dame on the chessboard²⁷⁴ and the print of a book. The chess man Francesh Vicent was going to take care of writing a monumental piece for the new chess game and since Valencia had helped the Queen financially it was allowed to print the piece in Valencian as a reward.

There is no doubt that the subject of the work of the new powerful dame in chess was discussed in many intellectual circles of Spain and so Elio Antonio de Nebrija learned²⁷⁵ about reforming of the game of chess and andarraya with a new powerful dame in Valencia. We have seen that Nebrija before Columbus's voyage had informed the Queen of the advantages of grammar through Bishop Hernando de Talavera. Nebrija's dictionaries were now other means to teach the laws the defeater (Spain) imposes over the defeated (Granada) or the whole world. Thus in 1495, the year of the work of Francesh Vicent, we also see a Castilian-Latin Dictionary by Nebrija with the terms "dame is almost Miss - domina" and "andarraia - calulorum ludus" and next the figure of the Latin word "novum" that cannot be anything but new.

²⁷³ We know that the Queen was vain and liked honours and fame.

²⁷⁴ We don't know whether they played chess with the powerful dame, but even with chess people kept gambling. Francisco Moro from Logroño, squire of the guards of Captain Puertocarrero, was able to win 20,000 maravedies from Juan González de Falces playing chess. Archivo General de Simancas, R.G.S. 1495-IX-10, folio 139. **Quoted by Prof. Francisco Veas in: Actualización científica y didáctica en historia medieval (1998). Capítulo El Juego en la edad media, notas para su estudio. P. 207**

²⁷⁵ Como la reina estaba a favor de la divulgación el ambiente era apropiado para una rápida comunicación.

According to Nebrija Spain²⁷⁶ had to teach its culture to the whole world.



One of Columbus's ships

Presumably Francesh Vicent's work was a success in the chess circles of Aragon and Italy and the climate was now appropriate, with intellectuals in their favour such as Nebrija, to have it in Castilian as soon as possible. Thus Spain may disclose the work in Castile and elsewhere in the world, another way to show their power. It was therefore necessary to find a person with extensive knowledge of Castilian and Valencian to prepare the piece in Castilian. The candidate was Lucena, a student in Salamanca who published his work in the fall of 1497 but presumably had had chess texts in his possession since 1495.

The Catholic Monarchs were concerned about teaching the children of the defeated in Granada and Nebrija's work was essential for that. Fray Hernando de Talavera was in charge of peacefully converting the Moors, hoping that the defeated Moors would be assimilated. He knew Arabic and spoke Arabic with them, he tried to boost the romance

²⁷⁶ To make the reading easier we say Spain. Naturally, the Catholic Monarchs never used the form «Monarchs of Spain», but the form «*Rey e Reyna de Castilla, de Leon, de Aragon, de Siçilia, de Toledo...*»

language to gradually implement its use in church ceremonies. Presumably Nebrija found in Talavera his protector and a good defender of his ideas.



Discovery of America in 1492

It may sound untrue, but the Inquisition disturbed this great man who always defended scientific freedom²⁷⁷ and liberal attitudes against fanatics who tried to give him to the Inquisition.

“Do not let the Sacred Texts be profaned by mane so ignorant of the good arts. Favour the geniuses. And enlighten the two lights of our religion which are now extinguished, Greek and Hebrew... While the other language (Hebrew) is gone and if what they want is achieved,

²⁷⁷ CARRETE, CARLOS (1992) El judaísmo español y la Inquisición, Ed. Mapfre, Madrid. P. 135.

very shortly this worshipped and ancient language with which the beginnings of our religion have been trusted will fall into oblivion. Thus if it is prohibited to read the Hebrew texts or if they are disappeared, if they take them, tear them and burn them, if they think that the Greek books in which were thrown the foundations of the Primitive Church are necessary in any way, forcedly we will find ourselves in the big chaos that existed before the Sacred Texts; men, without the lights of the Sacred Texts, will walk around in the obscurity of an endless night”.

The Grand Inquisitor and humanist Cisneros had to protect him. Cisneros knew very well the affection that he had always had for Queen Isabella and what this great man meant for Spain. In return Nebrija sent him a book with a dedication to the Holy Office that is worth an autobiography:



The Holy Inquisition

“Why is it that I cannot think but of hard things or publish only works that cause distaste? What to do in a country where they award those who corrupt the Sacred Texts and, on the contrary, those who correct what is faulty and rectify what is wrong see themselves defamed and even sentenced to an undignified death if they defend their beliefs? Must I say forcedly that I do not know what I know? What kind of slavery or despotic power is this?”

Spain was indebted to this great man and Cisneros knew that too well. From the fifteenth century onwards many countries would recognize and fear the preeminence of the Spaniards.

This Holy Inquisition was cause of the desperation for the Jews and reason why many Jews fled Spain to avoid being ruined. The hatred of the crown was increasing, which is showed in the literature. Fortunately the Spanish Pope Alexander hosted many Jews (scientists, businessmen, industrialists, etc.) with open arms on his territory, because despite many scandals this pope defended culture like no one else did. Spain therefore lost a lot of talent and this is the reason for the disclosure of checkers and modern chess to other countries as we indicated in Chapter 3 of this book, whose study we do not consider necessary to include in this work.



Cardenal Cisneros

CONCLUSION:

As Royal Chronicler Antonio Nebrija had early knowledge of what was happening in court and as he was preparing his Spanish-Latin dictionary, the court would facilitate all necessary data for his book and also extracts of the most important events that occurred in Spain.

Nebrija created a humanistic and cultured environment on a large scale. Thus culture in Castile had an advance of several decades on Northern Europe, which did not reach England, France, or the German states. Maybe only some Italian states.

Once America was discovered, the Queen from 1493 onwards, free from the worries of war, indulged in activities that were very appreciated by her father, becoming a generous protector of all sciences and arts.

Luis de Santángel and the poets of *Scachs d'amor* influenced King Ferdinand in 1493 to print a piece on modern chess. It was now time to show the world what the Spanish nation was made of by symbolising the Queen (dame) on the chessboard.

CHAPTER 28

The definition of “Checkers”

*The important thing is to realize that
you cannot reach the truth simply from word study*
H.M. HUBEY

There is a lot of confusion about the origin of checkers among historians. And this has happened since the beginning; even checkers book writers had this problem in the 17th century. Rodrigo Caro²⁷⁸ in his book from 1624 says it is a very old game and it appears that it had copied Pantoja de Ayala²⁷⁹ because in 1624 Pantoja de Ayala refers as *checkers* to an old game where the opponent's pieces are captured by cornering in his book written in Latin. Pedro Ruiz Montero²⁸⁰ (1591) says that the famous knowledgeable Scevola played checkers. Lorenzo Valls²⁸¹ (1597) with the nickname "the Valencian" does not say that it's old, because he considers it from Valencia and Juan de Timoneda²⁸² (1635), bookseller and printer of Valencia with texts in

²⁷⁸ **CARO, RODRIGO** (1624) *Días geniales o lúdricos*, Manuscript. Edition of Jean-Pierre Etienvre, Espasa-Calpe S.A., Madrid 1978. 2 volumes.

²⁷⁹ **PANTOJA DE AYALA, PEDRO** (1625) *Commentaria in Titulum de Aleatoribus, Digestis et Codice, seu de Ludorum universa antiquitate*, Madrid. (Manuscript 84-I-17 Bibliothek Colombina - Sevilla)

²⁸⁰ **RUIZ MONTERO, PEDRO** (1591) *Libro del Juego de las Damas* (Book of Checkers Game), vulgarmente nombrado el marro, Valencia

²⁸¹ **VALLS, LORENÇO** (1597) *Libro del Juego de las Damas*, por otro nombre el Marro de Punta, Valencia., Valencia. - (Library of the Palace, Madrid). Valls said: "Our checkers game lacks this (commonly called 'el marro')".

²⁸² **TIMONEDA, JUAN** (1635) Book called *Ingenio*, which is about the "Marro de Punta game" by Juan Timoneda, Dedicated to the magnificent Mr. Ynnigo de Losca, Captain of Spain Galeras. To which "ocho trechas de mucho primor", by Antonio Miron y del Castillo, Tolosa, has been added.

his book from c. 1518, does not speak of ancient times either, but considers it a game from Valencia²⁸³.

Pedro Ruiz Montero says in his book "played with a ball, checkers, ..." and later says "the Checkers game", meaning that it is a game where you play with the king and where the king piece is a feature on the board. Checkers itself is named after the king piece, which is called Dama in Spanish²⁸⁴, that is, the new powerful king and since the use of unlimited kings was allowed, this pastime is called "play checkers", "checkers (ladies' game)" or "the Checkers (ladies) game" in the plural. This is different from chess, where each competitor could only have one lady - queen - and this entertainment was called "the lady's chess" in the singular.

We have seen that Juan Timoneda calls the game "marro de punta", "marro que llaman de punta game", "plays marro que llaman de punta", "marro de punta game" and Pedro Ruiz Montero speaks of "el marro" and "marro game", but does not mention the word "punta" - sharp end - anywhere, something that Lorenzo Valls does in the title of his book, "marro de punta". So in Valencia it is commonly spoken of "marro de punta" while in Andalusia of "playing checkers" in 1595²⁸⁵.

This should mean that the game has necessarily had some developmental stages to finish in a game that eventually would be called *checkers (damas) game*, or simply *checkers (damas)* in Spain

²⁸³ From the beginning it looked to me as a tell off **nuestro marro de punta** as it has to play the game standing with their twenty-four pawns, which are twelve white and twelve black, because by chance one could say: whoever wrote this book did not know what he did, since he did not put in from the beginning how it has to be played, and how you can either lose or win ... "

²⁸⁴ The poet in Lorenzo Valls' book (1597) clearly states: "... .That way Lorenzo Valls is the one who deprives us - of the confused and turbulent fire, of the game called Damas (ladies)..." . We do not believe that the poet wanted to refer to women.

²⁸⁵ In Alonso Guerra's manuscript, reduced in the same style by graduate Diego de Argomedo in 1658 we see the title as *Book to play checkers*. The manuscript owner, Mr. Victor Cantalapiedra from Valladolid, stipulated the date of Alonso Guerra to 1595.

and this is precisely the confusion, because in each change of the game the name was not changed right away.

We just imagine the alquerque pawns, in this case 12 men, placed on the chessboard without the help of kings in the game, and then we have a game that already looks a lot like checkers. But is this really a game of checkers? It was probably called marro or marro de punta interchangeably. The only thing they did was take 12 alquerque pawns, put them on the chessboard, and keep practicing the alquerque rules, but with the difference that the men who reached the eighth line could come back and kill the opponent's men. It was played with diagonal movements on the chessboard, only on the white squares, and even was practiced on stripes the same way - diagonally - with the name of andarraya, as we have seen that was the case in the Kingdom of Castile.

We can't consider checkers a game like this, because in the game there wasn't a piece with the name of king, which means that there was no promotion. We know that the andarraya game existed before the introduction of the new powerful queen in chess. Therefore we don't consider andarraya a game of checkers, because we don't have manuscripts or other evidence that clearly shows that kings were used in the game. And now that we know that the new powerful king is an invention of Valencia, in chess and checkers (current name) it is absolutely necessary to have a definition for checkers games to avoid any game being called checkers game with weak arguments as has so often been done by historians.

With the same difficulty goes Mehl²⁸⁶:

En fait, tout débat reste vain tant que n'est pas précisé ce que recouvre l'expression jeu de dames. C'est un jeu de guerre, jeu à information complète, avec capture, et dans lequel le combat qui oppose les jetons de deux camps se déroule sur un échiquier régulièrement quadrillé.

²⁸⁶ MEHL JEAN-MICHEL (1990) Les jeux au royaume de France du XIII^e au d^ebut du XVI^e siècle, Editions Fayard. Page 147

Translation:

In fact, any debate is pointless until it is clearly defined what precisely covers the term *ladies' game*. See; it is a war game, complete information game, with capture, and in which the battle between the two camps is carried out on a regularly checkered chessboard.

We therefore now suggest the definition of the necessary features for checkers²⁸⁷:

1. There are promoted men in the game (**Ir. Gerard Bakker**).
2. There are at least 2 empty rows on the board between the two initial positions. (**Rob Jansen**)
3. The amount of cells or intersection points in the game is even. (**Rob Jansen**)
4. Pawns or pieces (not the king) can only be consumed while moving forward²⁸⁸, over the enemy pawns, standing just behind the last captured pawn.
5. The pawns or pieces have a unique way of moving that may be orthogonal or diagonal, but never backwards.
6. Using the chessboard (**Ir. Gerard Bakker**).
7. If lines, using the same diagonal stripes as chess (Andarraya).

We don't consider etymological terms as valid and definitive either because, as we stated earlier in the history of chess and checkers, we work with documents. Etymology is simply an aid to the investigation but cannot be used frequently as unique and basic arguments of it.

On the other hand, knowing the good connection there was between Queen Isabella the Catholic and Nebrija and the 3 Scachs d'amor poets with King Ferdinand, it is assumed that the new game Andarraya, as indicated by Nebrija, could have been the new game of checkers by introducing the new powerful king (dama). But we have no proof and

²⁸⁷ Many authors believe that the game was born from chess, such as Van der Linden, Branch, and finally: **FISKE, WILLARD** (1905). Chess in Iceland, p. 93

²⁸⁸ We are talking about the old game. Nowadays you can eat forwards and backwards.

therefore we have to discard it as a new game of checkers for now. Having the elements considered basic in the history of the game of checkers we have the following situation:

| Game name | Game mode | Documentary proof | Is it a game of Damas (Kings) ? |
|--|---|--|---------------------------------|
| Andarraya 1454 (Castilla) | Going back Game of lines Diagonal as in chess game Without “damas” | Without game documents | No, there’s not enough evidence |
| New Powerful “dama” (queen) (Valencia) | New name New movement Powerful [piece?] of the “dama” in chess game | Manuscript Scachs d’amor Poem 1475-1476 | |
| Marro Game of marro “Marro de Punta” (Valencia) with “damas” | New game in Valencia “Andarraya” with “damas” 12 pieces With “damas” | Nebrija 1495 MS Perugia 1503 Juan Timoneda Book 1635 Texts from 1520 | Yes |
| Game of “Damas” “Damas” (Valencia) with “dama(s)” | Owes its origin to the “damas” used in the Game Chess board 12 pieces | Pedro Ruiz Montero 1591 Lorenzo Valls 1597 | Yes |

Valencia, place of origin of - The new powerful “dama” on chess - The Game of “damas”

The nickname of Ruiz Montero himself in the manuscript of Alonso Guerra²⁸⁹ from 1595 was “el marro”. That is to say that the common term for the game of “damas” (game with “damas”) was marro or “Marro de punta”. Marro was a collective name for some board games

²⁸⁹ Manuscript in possession of the bibliophile Víctor Cantalapiedra de Valladolid.

and therefore is always necessary to have wide proof in form of documents to determine exactly whether we have to talk about a “damas” game or some kind of Alquerque game which can be played with 12, 9, and 3 pieces. With this we mean that the “joc marro” from 1370 and “a marro”, as we describe in chapter 5 of Marro, can’t be a game of “damas”, being as the coronation, as the use of the “*dama*” piece and the use of the name “*dama*” in the game of “Damas” is posterior to this date.

Precursory names of “damas”. (Games without using “damas”), before 1495

| Country | 12 pieces “Alquerque” (precursor of the “damas”) | 9 pieces “Alquerque” “Juego de Molino” | 3 pieces “Alquerque” Three in a row |
|-------------|---|---|---|
| Spain | Marro Andarraya* | Marro | Marro |
| France | Marelles Jeu de douze marelles | Marelles Jeu a neuf marelles | Marelles Jeu de trois marelles |
| England | Morris Draughts* | Morris Nine men morris | Morris |
| Italy | Marella | Marella | Marella |
| Netherlands | Marellen Twaalf stukken | Marellen Negenstukken | Marellen |

***Could be games over lines**

We think that the same “andarraya” game of 1454 from the reign of Castilla²⁹⁰ was called in the reign of Aragon, marro or “marro de punta”, but we don’t have any documentary proof and therefore we haven’t mentioned it in the previous scheme. Out of the country marro

²⁹⁰ See Andarraya chapter

had its translations as in marrellen (the Netherlands), merelles (France), marella (Italy), and morris (England). On the other hand andarraya could have been draughts (red) in England. We say “draughts” because we have no proofs.

Here we see how difficult it is to consider one of these games as a game of draughts just with etymological arguments. Van der Stoep, the etymology expert, believes that if there are no documents, the origin of the draughts can be investigated through etymology - an argument that we reject. In the Hoofdlĳn Draughts magazine²⁹¹ Van der Stoep says that the game of marro existed in the Middle Ages and that it was a game of “damas” - an argument that we reject, for there weren’t “damas” in the game.

In chess literature there are the known manuscripts of the Bonus Socius (BS) and Civis Bononiae (CB)²⁹² families. The manuscripts are scattered throughout Europe, especially Italy, and date to the XIV and XV century, the last date found that refers to the manuscript from the Estense Library of Modena (Italy) being 1454. From this codex seems to derive the one dated 1466²⁹³ that is kept in the British Museum. In the BS and CB manuscripts the game of alquerque can always be seen, but never the game of draughts; one more proof that in those years the game of draughts was not known. The moment that a game is named *juego de damas* it necessarily has to refer to the powerful “dama” originated from the chess game, given that the word “dama” in the sense of the new powerful “dama” and of a lady with distinguished demeanor comes from the game of chess. If for any reason you want to say that *checkers* or *draughts* or *other games* are older than the Spanish “juego de damas”, we don’t think it reasonable to also call this games *juego de damas*. How many times has it been called *draughts* or *checkers* as “juego de damas”, indicating that they are from the XV, XIV centuries or even older?!

²⁹¹ **STOEP, ARIE VAN DER** (1993) Hoofdlĳn (1993). N^o. 31, page. 8

²⁹² **CALVO, RICARDO** (1997) Lucena: The evasion in chess from the convert Calisto. Pages 123-127

²⁹³ Courtesy of Mr. Jos  Antonio Garz n Roger.

They say then that the “dama” can only move one place forward or backward, and then in other languages they use the word king for the “dama”. These types of games, according to our criteria, mustn’t be named “juego de damas” if they are previous to 1495, but as precedents of the “damas” game. However, we think that all of the games that have promotion to the “dama” are posterior to 1495 because there have never been documentary proofs (etymology is not valid!) of games like checkers or draughts already having “damas” (kings) before 1495²⁹⁴.

The game of alquerque as it was described by Cristobal of Villalon in 1558, indicating that the alquerque is a Spanish invention, could be about a game of damas. At this moment there already existed the new powerful dama and the alquerque from the Castilla’s reign could be what marro de punta was in Aragon. Not always was a game changed with other rules (introduction of the new powerful “dama” for another name. We have seen that in Aragon this would take several years. It is possible that in Castile the name *alquerque*, *andarraya*, *castro* and *to play damas* was applied at first for a game that later was to be called *the game of “damas”*.

We support the need for sheltering documents and validating research, and if there are no documents, we can only speak of hypotheses or probabilities. The games above can’t be considered as games of “damas”, because they didn’t know the promotion and consequently there were no ladies in the game. In the case of France, at the time when there is promotion they began to speak of "dames". But "dames" in the sense of a game with ladies (dames in French), not in the sense of a game with pieces (dames), because the term "dames" for board pieces²⁹⁵ apparently belongs to the XVII and XVIII centuries.

²⁹⁴ In 1495 Nebrija says that the Andarraya game is new, just like the word “dama” (Domina). We also have the manuscript of Perugia in 1503 linked to Spain according to personal communications between the Italian investigator Sanvito and Garzon. Then 1518 is the year of the texts of the book of Timoneda (1635), but the endings in the book already reveal a long experience - we think of at least 30 years - in the game,.

²⁹⁵ Private information (2003) of the expert in games in France, Mr. Thierry Depaulis

The danger of working only with etymological data will be evident when we present some evidence.

Eales²⁹⁶ said that the hypothesis of medieval boards, also meaning “damas”, was in contradiction with the current interpretation of the medieval boards which in both English and French refer to a board game to be later called "backgammon" in England, “trictrac” in France, “pouf” in Germany. Van der Stoep in the magazines *Dammen* and *Hoofdljn*²⁹⁷ presented a theory that 12-piece alquerque knew a promotion whereby there would be a game of “damas”. This is an argument that both Mr. Garzón and I refute, since we can read in the chapter on alquerque that in 1283 the promotion was not known in the game of alquerque. Otherwise we would have been told by Alfonso X the Wise.

Mehl warns with emphasis²⁹⁸:

Un imbroglio terminologique est peut-être à l'origine de nombre des confusions qui entourent l'histoire de ce jeu (de damas). Le terme anglais « draughts » est en effet responsable de bien des erreurs. Il apparaît vers 1400 et connerve au départ tous les jeux qui consistent à déplacer de jetons sur un tablier. Ce n'est qu'à l'époque moderne qu'il est devenu l'équivalent de ce qui s'appelle encore le jeu de dames.

Translation:

A cheating terminology may be the cause of plentiful confusion surrounding the history of this game (checkers). The English word ‘draughts’ is in effect

²⁹⁶ **EALLES, R** (1985) *The History of a Game*, London pg. 49 Eales said:

“..... tables in the Middle Ages was not a single game; Murray has identified over twenty-five variant games played on the 2x12 backgammon board, and there were probably more. Tabula was often coupled with chess in medieval sources and so it has very frequently been misunderstood as draughts. There is no basis for this error despite the fact that both games were played with round flat counters”.

²⁹⁷ Hoofdljn (1993) issue 31 page 8

²⁹⁸ **MEHL, JEAN-MICHEL** (1990) *Les jeux au royaume de France du XIII^e au d'but du XVI^e siècle*, Editions Fayard. As France has until now been considered the country of origin of the « damas », Mehl's work is sensational, because Mehl is an expert in medieval history.

responsible for many errors. It appeared in 1400 and was the beginning of all the games that involve moving round pieces on a board. Only in modern times has it become the equivalent of what is still called the checkers game.

In the chapter of *Discussion* we have seen that according to the etymology of Van der Stoep the "pawn" piece must have been called "dama"²⁹⁹ in Spain before the year 1591, which is wrong³⁰⁰, because we have seen in the book of Timoneda that this is not the case. An irrefutable proof that ends with an isolated etymological argument without evidence.

If in France the pieces of a board are called "dames" in the XVI century and the piece alone "dame", this doesn't necessarily need to be the same in Spain. With proof from historian Garzón that the texts of Timoneda are very old and that the piece is called pawn we have seen that Spain is very different from France on this issue. At least with the data, the documents, in hand.

I have much more confidence in the methods used by other historians. Said Ir.Gerard Bakker³⁰¹:

„French terms *dame* and *jeu de dames* are therefore so much older than the Spanish chess terms *dama* and *axedrez de la dama*, which are older than the Spanish terms *de dama* and *juego de las damas*.”

Eales also makes common sense³⁰² to say that the new powerful lady is related to Spain or Portugal.

According to Van der Stoep³⁰³ and Kruijswijk³⁰⁴ this poem is about checkers. The French text is about jeu des dames³⁰⁵ (Amerval 1923)

²⁹⁹ **STOEP, ARIE VAN DER (1993).** Hoofdljn (1993) issue 33 page 21

³⁰⁰ Nothing can be said only with the knowledge of etymology without having studied in depth the actual historical situation in Spain. Van der Stoep doesn't know Spanish and consequently has only the French etymology to work with. However, the meaning of *dame* in France had some uses and in Spain others.

³⁰¹ **BAKKER, GERARD** ((1992) Het Nieuwe Damspel, p. 101

³⁰² **EALES, R** (1985) The History of a Game, London, p. 76

³⁰³ **STOEP, ARIE VAN DER** (1994b) Een schaakloze damhistorie, deel II geschiedenis, Rockanje, p. 109

and the two aforementioned Dutch historians claim with this reference that checkers was invented in France.

Je ne dit pas, quant on s'esbat
Joyeusement, sans nul debat
A quelque beau jeu gracieux,
Qui de soy n'est pas vicieux
Comme au jeu d'echecz ou des dames,
Qui sont beaulx jeux, non pas infames,
Et jeux sans sort, cela s'entent,
Que Dieu en soit fort malcontent.

Van der Stoep continues making the following observations:

The time factor does not count in favour of a development Fr. Dame = chess queen> (JEU DE) DAMES = checkers. The author states he started working on *Livre de deablerie* in 1496. His work was edited in 1508. Without the shadow of a doubt Eloy had syntonized his moralisations for a large audience. It was enough for the priest to refer to games of chess and checkers in front of this large audience, games which were generally known in about 1500. Bearing in mind the moment when the priest started writing, checkers was already known in 1490-1500. In the same period of time the reformed chess game with a spectacular queen called dame spread across France. Therefore the French name *Jeu de dames* must be older than the French word *Dame* = chess queen. In other words, *jeu de dames* does not mean 'game with dames'. To put it another way, the word game (*Jeu de*) dames and board games *Dame* = chess queen are homonymous.

It is noble of Van der Stoep to try to defend France with the term "jeu des dames"; according to historians such as Kruijswijk, Murray, Van der Stoep, and others it was the home of checkers, but it has many drawbacks:

³⁰⁴ KRUIJSWIJK, KAREL WENDEL (1966a) *Algemene historie en bibliografie van het damspel*, Den Haag, p. 73

³⁰⁵ AMERVAL ELOY DE (1508) *Le Livre de la Deablerie*, Parijs. (Robert Deschaux/Bernard Chavier) Genève, 1991

AMERVAL, ELOY DE (1923) *Le livre de deablerie*, ed. Charles Frederick Ward, 1923, deel II N° 2, chapter 13

1. No manuscripts or books about checkers from the sixteenth century have been found.³⁰⁶
2. The level of play of the players in the first French checkers book (Pierre Mallet, 1668) was very low.
3. Van der Stoep refers to 1508 without any proof that both the chess game and the checkers game were known generally. This is an argument we must reject since he does not give any proof.
4. France is not the motherland of the new powerful dame³⁰⁷
5. The term dame³⁰⁸, meaning piece (pawn) in the game, was a term for checkers only from the seventeenth century on³⁰⁹. Van der Stoep refers in Hoofdljn³¹⁰ to 1560, which is a year we have been unable to verify.
6. In Rabelais's book from the 1535 edition we can see terms such as 54: *au dames* and 53: *au forcé* which are too dubious for us to be able to state that they refer to checkers. *Au dames* are translated into German as *frauenspiel* (women's game) and *au forcé* as *Röpflins*. The

³⁰⁶ **FISKE, WILLIAM** (1905) Chess in Iceland, Pg. 94 states: In several very early chess MSs, composed on this side of the Pyrennees, the chess matter is followed by explanations of other table games, such as tables and merelles, but among these additional games draughts is, as far as we know, never found. This strengthens, if that were needed, the existing opinion favouring the Spanish origin of the game.

³⁰⁷ With this book we prove that the new powerful dame was an invention from Valencia and based on Queen Isabella the Catholic.

³⁰⁸ **STOEP ARIE VAN DER** (1984) History of Draughts, Rockanje. Van der Stoep says on p. 56: Until c. 1700 Fr. Dame and Du. Dam meant man for board-game. On page 57 it reads: Fr. Jeu de(s) dames and jouer aux dames mean respectively game with men and play with the men.

³⁰⁹ Information by the French game specialist Mr Thierry Depaulis: Van der Stoep says that c. 1560 a pawn in France was called dame meaning piece of the board, (Hoofdljn 1993, No. 33, Pag. 21), but Depaulis disagrees.

³¹⁰ Hoofdljn (1993), issue 33, p. 20. Van der Stoep refers to his book History of Draughts, 1984, p. 56, but we never see the year 1560.

name *Frauenspil*³¹¹ [Frauenspiel] is also found as a board game in Germany list in the first part of the sixteenth century.

7. We cannot try to silence historians just because they aren't experts in etymology or because they disagree on using etymology in historical investigations³¹². Etymology is very important, but always an auxiliary help or supporting science, it can never be the core of the decision and investigation, but this ought to be argued with other proof.

8. Van der Stoep had to rectify the board game matter³¹³, he was also wrong about the term marro de punta³¹⁴ and with this book he should

³¹¹ **JANSEN, ROB** (1996) Hoofddlijn, issue 46, pp. 32-34. Jansen studied both games in detail and came to the conclusion that they have nothing to do with checkers, but more with a board game. Jansen writes: "I think that the French term jeu de dames was originally the name for board game and refers to a kind of boards such as the ones mentioned in a book by Willard Fiske, *Chess in Iceland*, 1905 (without indicating page or exact game). Regarding the French game au forc   he says that in "Compleat Gamester" a board game is described where you must forcibly capture with the penalty of losing your own piece –"Why not take me?". 'R  pfli  ns' means the Western European word rob/rub = steal.

³¹² Van der Stoep refused arguments by Gerard Bakker based on the following words, found in the Hoofddlijn magazine issue 24 (1992): "Varkespest in damland" (swine fever in the checkersland) and "Geschiedschrijving in damland: met een lui  r om" (Description of the story in the checkersland: wearing a diaper).

I (Westerveld) got a letter where Van der Stoep wrote in 1989: "*Finally, a well-intentioned warning. In the field of linguistics and etymology, which is philology, it is very hard not to be wrong. If you write once that you believe the French word dames and the Spanish word damas have developed independently, as you state now in your letter, you become an impossible man. This is a job for the specialists. To challenge the current etymology of the French jeu de dames I have collected material for years and I have tried for years to have this all on paper. I hope you will study with seriousness what I have to say about the etymology of dame and don't you say anything. And if you doubt me on a scientific level, the Universidad of Leiden has accepted part of my books as a thesis for the doctorate in Dutch philology and my book has been included in the biannual compendium of scientific papers on French vocabulary. Therefore, Govert, be careful and don't compromise yourself in a field to which you are an outsider.*"

³¹³ Hoofddlijn (1993), issue 30, p. 3

also accept that in the alquerque game by Alfonso X the Wise there was no promotion³¹⁵. On the other hand, he should also assume that before 1591 the word *pawn* was used instead of the word *dame* in the checkers game for calling the pieces, unlike he tries to teach us by giving mythological reasons³¹⁶. Therefore these are far too many rectifications for using etymology too seriously or using it as the core of the historical investigation. Conclusion: there is too high a risk of errors with etymology.

The new powerful lady was developed in Spain in 1476, inspired by a lady with distinguished bearing. The word *dame* in 'jeu de dames' has a different meaning in France than Van der Stoep's meaning, who pretends the term 'checkers'.

In Spain there is no sign of the 12 pieces on the board being called *dames* (ladies) instead of pawns in checkers or *marro* (de punta). They were always called pawns in Spain in the 16th century. In Spain it was always referenced to play with the *dames* (ladies) in the sense of playing with the chess queens as a reference to the new powerful lady, never referring to the game pieces. And it is referenced in the following ways: "Game of checkers", "ladies" and "checkers", "play checkers," but until 1650 the article³¹⁷ "la" (the) was always used in

³¹⁴ **VAN DER STOEP, ARIE** (1984) *History of Draughts*, pp. 81 y 161. Van der Stoep says: "My hypothesis explains the Catalan name of draughts, viz. Marro de punto (lit.) alquerque on the checkered board....". In the chapter of Marro de Punta of our book we demonstrate that he was wrong.

³¹⁵ See the chapter *Alquerque*

³¹⁶ **STOEP, ARIE VAN DER** (1994b) *Een schaakloze damhistorie, deel II geschiedenis*, Rockanje

Hoofdlijn (1993) issue 33, p. 21. In this book we demonstrate that Timoneda's texts are from around 1520 and there the term pawn was used as piece of the board instead of the term "dame" as Van der Stoep claims based on etymology. In Timoneda's texts *dame* is always used meaning the new powerful dame.

³¹⁷ The only exception is Juan de Junta's libro "Juego de damas" of 1556. It is possible that in the kingdom of Castile people called "juego de marro de punta" by the name of "juego de damas" (checkers) or "juego de las damas" (game of checkers), but we have no evidence of that fact.

Spain, so we always see **"the ladies"** (**las damas** or **el juego de las damas**) in the sense of powerful chess queens.

We will show that the name „juego de damas” in Spain - ladies - always refers to the new powerful queen of chess:

1520 texts from Timoneda's book printed in 1635.

We always see that for the new powerful piece in the sense of queen (England: the 'king') - lady - name is used. For the twelve pieces of the game the term "pawn" is used.

1556. Juan de Junta's Juego de damas. We have addressed this issue in the chapter on Dames (ladies). As the term „**las damas**” (the ladies) was not used here, we have no evidence whether this title refers to upper class women or checkers. However, we have classified this remark as a book of checkers - ladies -, but with plenty of doubts³¹⁸.



Libro de Motes, damas y caballeros by Luis de Milán (1535)

³¹⁸ In 1535 there was a book written by Luis de Milán in Valencia with the title *Libro de Motes, damas y caballeros*. Abbreviating mistakenly this book as a book of checkers is an easy step.

It is really odd, but we see the checkerboard still present in Valencia. The work „Partida de damas” (game of checkers)³¹⁹ with a checkerboard on the cover might suggest that this is a treatise on checkers, but in reality it's a work of contemporary artistic expressions by young contemporary artists.



Great ladies - at the Valencia board again. Consuelo Ciscar and Yoko Ono face to face in the artist's peculiar chess. As Consuelo Ciscar told us, in Yoko Ono's chess, where all the pieces are white, after the opening move both sides get confused, ending the struggle and then finishing with a peace and harmony reign. A new proposal, artistic and pacifist, using the metaphor of the board. Exhibition held in 1997 in Alicante and Valencia.

³¹⁹ Museum of Fine Arts, Valencia (1999) *Partida de damas*. Exhibition organized by the Consortium of Museums of the Valencian Community. As the driving force behind so suggestive initiative Autonomous Secretary of Culture Consuelo Ciscar says today "In *Partida de damas* we have a set of instances by which we are invited, on the occasion of March 8 (Working Women's Day), to join for a more plural and open world in which the voice of women, not without effort, has a more effective presence ". A clear claim in favor of women, with the checkerboard as a beautiful artistic metaphor.

They might have taken the checkerboard, in an allegorical sense, thinking about the words of freedom by Covarrubias (1611):

El juego de las damas con el tablero de ajedrez, todos lo saben; llamándose así por ser fácil, por el modo del jugar de las piezas, con la libertad de la dama.

Translation:

Checkers with the chessboard, everyone knows; being called like that for being easy, for the way of playing the pieces with the lady (Queen, King) freedom.

Be it as it may, the Lady is a symbol of freedom, and Isabella the Catholic was a representation of that freedom for women, something that women today rightly seek. In Valencia even today checkers games played formerly are being recalled unconsciously in every corner of the city!

1591 in poet Miguel Borrás's sonnet in Pedro Ruiz Montero's book says:

„Hazes con damas, olvidar las damas”: translation:

"You perform with ladies, forgetting the ladies"

which literally means playing ladies - (chess queens) in checkers, you forget about women of high standing. That is, ladies is used in this verse in the sense of the powerful chess piece.

The title of Pedro Ruiz Montero's book is *Libro del juego de las damas*

....

That is, the new game with powerful chess queens.

1595. In Alonso Guerra's manuscript, reduced in the same style by Mr. Diego de Argomedo in 1658, we observe "libro para jugar a las damas" in the title³²⁰.

³²⁰ In Alonso Guerra's manuscript, reduced in the same style by Mr. Diego de Argomedo in 1658, we see the title as *libro para jugar a las damas*. The manuscript owner, Mr. Victor Cantalapiedra from Valladolid, stipulated Alonso Guerra's date in 1595.

1597. Lorenzo Valls's book is titled: "libro del juego de las damas", which means the same, the new checkers with powerful chess queens.

CONCLUSION

It is essential to define what a game of checkers really is, and here we defend the thesis of Ir. Gerard Bakker that the game should have the queen (dame) of the new chess. All similar games which cannot be proven that they had a dame (England: king) in the game cannot be classified as a game of checkers.

The name of many ancient games has remained despite having introduced a lady in such games in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Therefore it is necessary to scientifically know the date of the lady's introduction before proclaiming these games as checkers before the fifteenth century.

We cannot accept etymology as the core of historical research applied to the origin of the game of checkers as it is not scientifically used that way in history. Etymology is important, but it is always an auxiliary aid.

In Spain the dame - lady - was used in checkers in the sense of the new powerful queen originated from the New Chess in 1476. That is why in Spain checkers literally means the game with new powerful ladies.

CHAPTER 29

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Historians should be judged not what they know,
But by what they research
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CHAPTER 30

Epilogue

José Antonio Garzón Roger
Chess historian

It doesn't matter whether the change is welcomed with malicious condemnation, with treacherous invectives, with even crueler silence; as long as reason is on your side, it will not be long before the modernizer begins to attract young people, who, precisely because of their youth, have no past to defend; on your side will also be those impartial wise men, who, in the midst of the overpowering flow of reigning doctrine, know how to maintain a calm mood and independent criteria.

SANTIAGO RAMON Y CAJAL
Nobel Prize for Physiology and Medicine, 1906

Govert Westerveld's aptitudes for research astounded me from the very first day we met. His capacity for work, his creative and intuitive spirit, his intellectual integrity in accepting and taking on board criticism, his rigour and transparency when it comes to facing the evidence against him were all astounding. It is by no means common to come across all these features in one person during these times in which we live.

The book the reader has in his hands at this moment is one of the most profound, rigorous and well-documented investigations ever into the history of draughts or chess. In this monumental work, around one thousand books dealing with history, bibliography, technical treatises, literature, general culture, etc. were carefully studied and referenced.

And so, in my view, any attempt to challenge Westerveld's ideas by disbelieving that a great queen, Isabella of Castile, was the spur for the

great revolution undergone by chess in the last third of the 15th century, and whose corollary was, according to Westerveld, the birth of the game of draughts a few years later, without arguments of proof to back up these ideas, is lacking in all seriousness, and would suppose, in any case, a total lack of respect for the enormous effort invested by Westerveld over so many years. His tenacity in searching for the truth without regard to the obstacles, many of which have been maliciously strewn in his way, is unswerving.

A subject as serious as this cannot be tackled lightly. One would first have to overcome the barrier of the Spanish language and obviously have a comprehensive knowledge of the history of Spain, particularly the 15th and 16th centuries, when it was the most powerful nation on earth, both politically speaking as well as culturally and in literature. Only then could one speak with any degree of authority.

In his research he undertook a thorough analysis of all the games which at some time (often only in passing, with merely a brief mention in a paragraph) have been named as candidates as the predecessor for the game of draughts. In the pages of this monumental work by Govert Westerveld, we see how the game of draughts slowly sheds centuries of antiquity (Egyptian, Greek and Roman games are discarded with decisive proof).

Westerveld's painstaking task of studying all ancient games has come up with the forerunners of the game of draughts, such as *alquerque de 12*, *castro*, or *andarraya*. And precisely what these were missing to become the game of draughts we know today was the coating or varnish -genial idea, key to Westerveld's thesis- given by modern chess. These games did not have the forward only movement and the crowning (queening), taken from the pawns with the appearance of modern chess.

In fact, Govert Westerveld is the first scholar to demonstrate, decisively and with proof, the connection between modern chess and the birth of the game of draughts, vindicating the Spanish (and more

precisely, the Valencian) origin of it all. Westerveld himself also refers to the historians who, mostly intuitively, have held differing opinions. The crux of the matter can be traced back to the arrival of this unflinching researcher, his profound analysis, his resoluteness and confidence in his convictions, knowing that there is no going back on the truth he now unveils to us (the final adieu to centuries of darkness, the cult of false ideas, of a wait that looked like it would never end). Van der Stoep and other historians had given absolute priority to etymological criteria and they considered that, as the word *dame* was of French origin, then the game of *damas* (draughts) itself must also be of the same nationality.

The pleonasm of etymological criteria, for Van der Stoep, would be what he takes to be the most ancient written reference to the games of draughts, in a poetic text from 1508 (Amerval) where it says: *Comme au jeu d'echecz ou des dames*.

We cannot possibly "consider this to be documentary proof given that it comes from a book of poetry with little or no technical worth. Furthermore, without any French document or book from the period to validate it, something which on the other hand would be to be expected, (and, in fact, the first French technical book is from Mallet in 1668, much later than the Spanish references from the 16th century) it strikes us as highly improbable that this poetic text could refer to the game of draughts, especially in light of the following points:

The period circa 1508 is precisely the most telling moment for distinguishing the two forms of playing chess in France (just as it was in Spain one decade earlier). The poet, who was doubtlessly no expert in chess, distinguished between the two forms of playing: *échecs* and *échecs des dame* and (with the new powerful queen, *ajedrez de la dama* or queen's chess in Spain) and he put *ou des dames* in plural in order to be able to rhyme it with the following line: *Qui sont beaux jeux, non pas infames*.

It is also highly probable that the text referred to a game for ladies (*dames*), a very common judgement at that time, in opposition to chess which was considered a difficult game more suitable for gentlemen.

Por instance, we could be dealing with the game of *alquerque* (we could not expect from a poet more precision in the terms used). We have already seen that when translating into French a text by Luis Vives the term *aux dames* was used when it was actually talking about the game of *alquerque*. Also Francisco de Luque, in 1603, allows women the choice of using the name *damas* (draughts) for the game of *alquerque* (merels). It might also be referring to a generic board game with pieces, because, as I would insist, this weak and confusing line does not appear in a technical text and it is outrageous that in the whole history of the game of draughts, its false French origin, as sustained by Murray, Kruijswijk and Van der Stoep, is based solely on this isolated sentence. We also saw how Jansen held the opinion that at first he was speaking of the board game with the term *jeu de dames*. In Westerveld's work we can contemplate how in many paintings in France we see a game that is called *dames*, yet the very image itself shows us that it is a game of cornering similar to *ludus latrunculorum*. When we are not dealing with a technical text we have no guarantee of the correct use of the names of various games.

There is one extremely important point that has hitherto been overlooked. The terms *Regina* and *Domina* suddenly began to appear in medieval chess texts, for instance those by the Cessolis group, but of course not with reference to the new powerful piece. In chess we can perhaps talk about a "weak" queen. We are still dealing with the old medieval *fers* which, as they lacked a correspondence in real life, had no deep roots. In the 13th and 14th centuries it goes through a change in name and appearance yet its power remained the same. This argument is irrefutable: the title of queen/dama, which responds to the reality of the medieval kingdoms with queen consorts wielding barely any power, does not coincide at all with the birth of the new powerful queen. They were completely independent processes. We have already seen that this last mentioned process is the culmination of the idealization of women as crystallized in Queen Isabella by the Valencian poets of *Scachs d'amor* who put the Queen and *Dama* on the same level, terms they use for questions of personal preference or taste. Opposed to this vague and imprecise French line, on the contrary, **in the synaptic chart that follows we will lay out the proof**

and documents that confirm the Valencian origin, in an absolutely indisputable fashion, of modern chess and its connection with the birth of the game of draughts (*marro de punta*) which also happened in Valencia:

In this light, the flaws in the etymological criteria, with no supporting documentary proof, are crystal clear. Besides, not even the date of 1508 would be the first reference to the game of draughts. In personal correspondence with Alessandro Sanvito, the Italian historian confirmed as much with his discovery of a document dating from 1506 in the archives of Modena, where the name of Lucrecia Borgia's chess teacher is mentioned as Francesco, and he believes that this could be none other than Francesch Vicent, of Valencian origins like the Borgias themselves. But Sanvito also suggests another, less convincing, yet plausible explanation: that the chess codices of Perugia and Cesena were both from the early 16th century and according to Sanvito prior to the manuscript referring to Lucrecia Borgia. These codices were written by the same hand and there are many similar terms, taking into account that in both codices, which Sanvito date so³²¹ between 1502 and 1506, figures a diagram with the initial position of the game of draughts with the caption *ludus dominarum*³²² and so we have a reference. this time of a technical nature, older and completer consistent with the Spanish and Valencian genesis of the game.

Knowledge of the history of the Jews and their expulsion from Spain is crucial for any proper understanding of the quick expansion of the new games of modern chess and draughts. The Jews of Aragon and Catalonia were welcomed in Italy and it is well documented that the Pope from Valencia, Alexander VI (Rodrigo Borja or Borgia) not only fostered culture and promoted artistic patronage, but he also gave refuge to numerous Jews. His pontificate (1492-1503) was to coincide

³²¹ Personal correspondence. Both manuscripts were described in the major work by Sanvito. *Bibliografia italiana degli scacchi. Dalle origine al 1999*. Edizioni Sylvestre Bonnard. Milan, 1999. The Perugia codex is numbered 49 and the Cesena codex 53, this latter discovered by Franco Pratesi.

³²² Also in the Cesena manuscript there is an initial position for a game of draughts with an identical caption, *ludus dominarum*, which further reinforces the idea of the same author for both texts, as Sanvito himself suggests.

precisely with the expulsion of the Jews and the extension of the new powerful queen, a phenomena which, as Westerveld has demonstrated, are interdependent.

Another reference prior to 1508, comes from Timoneda's book, whose study by Govert -Westerveld is, as we have seen, crucial in the history of chess (it is clear that *marro de punta* derives from chess, at a date close to the first published book, Vicent, 1495) and confirms the birth of draughts in Valencia.

In fact, this idea was already suggested by the first authors of treatises: the Valencian scholars Timoneda spoke of “*our*” *marro de punta* and Lorenzo Valls of “*our*” *game of draughts*, and even Ruiz Montero spoke of the *happiness of the geniuses of the Valencian nation*, when referring to the game.

The texts, as we have painted out, are practically all on chess, and on all aspects, being dated no later than 1520. Furthermore, there is another extremely important fact: the scholarly nature of Timoneda's book would lead us to believe that at least 20 or 25 years had passed since the elaboration and the birth of the game, a landmark we would therefore have to situate in Valencia at the end of the 15th century. Timoneda's book would suggest that during this time the game was always called *marro de punta*. This is conclusive proof of the lack of any Relation between the French word *dame* and the origin of the game, *marro de punta*, in Spain. Van der Stoep had made a mistake when considering that, etymologically speaking, *punta* meant *punto*, *casilla*. The proof comes from Jansen and Westerveld and was to be found in ancient specialized literature in Spain (the Cessolis manuscript from the Cathedral of Gerona, 15th Century, and the Codex of Alfonso X el Sabio, 1283). In both texts, as we have seen, it is patently clear that *punta* means nothing more than the diagonal movement, which was the essential note of the new game in opposition to generic games of *alquerque* or *marro*.

We will now proceed to elaborate an abstraction (bestowing the synoptic chart with its true significance) centring on a persuasive idea: draughts derived from modern chess. It would be fantastic to come across evidence, whose logical succession and territorial coherence would guarantee this idea with legitimacy. Incredibly, there is not one

but seven written and technical pieces of evidence (eight, if we count Lucena's book which is essentially copied from Vicent's book) and documentary proofs related chronologically and all localized in Valencia:

Genesis of modern chess.

Fenollar's literary chess gatherings with his close friends Vinyoles, Castellví and others. The need to adopt Arabic chess to the new times. Period of tests. This crystallized, giving rise to a new chess with references back to real life. The portrayal of a powerful Queen, Isabella of Castile, was projected onto the board, producing the following documentary evidence:

- 1.-1475-76, Scachs d'amor. Introduction of the Queen and the first rules of modern chess.
- 2.-1495, Vicent's book. Popularisation and consolidation of modern chess, already entrenched after 20 years of practice.
- 3.-1497 Lucena's book, a work based on Vicent's book. Its translation to Castellano Spanish definitively extended modern chess to the whole of Spain.

Creation of marro de punta (draughts).

End of the 15th century, the unusual popularity of *Ajedrez de la Dama* (or modern chess) led to the creation of *marro de punta* (later to be called *damas*; there is some possibility that in Castile the game of *andarraya* was similar to *marro de punta* in Valencia/Aragon). The acceptance of the new game in Valencia is widespread and its practice is soon widespread and the first technical treatises begin to appear, all of them from Valencia, and with a noticeably high level:

- 4.-.Texts from Timoneda's book, circa 1518-1520. These are the oldest documents on *marro de punto* (draughts), proving its complete dependence on modern chess; its style remits to a technical work on chess, which, with almost total certainty, is Vicent's book from 1495. These texts by Timoneda must have seen the light of day in:
- 5.- Book from 1547 published in Valencia. The first book published in the world on this subject, until now attributed to Torquemada. Yet, as a result of the present work by Dr. Westerveld, the author would now

appear to be Juan Timoneda. This must be the first edition of Timoneda's book, to which we will refer later.

6.- Book by Pedro Ruiz Montero, Valencia, 1591.

7.- Book by Lorenzo Valls, Valencia, 1597.

8.- Book by the Valencian author Juan Timoneda, Tolosa, 1635. All evidence would indicate that this is a second edition of the lost book from 1547.

How is it that until the present moment in time nobody had perceived the tremendous revolution brought about by Timoneda's book on *marro de punta*? The decisive repercussions for the history of chess, given its connections both in time and place with the birth of modern chess, and for the history of draughts (it is in fact a type of notarial act of the birth of the game), did not escape the attention of Westerveld, who spotted them in 1997. Nevertheless, the criticism he received was unjustifiable. Our joint study of the games (draughts-chess) throws sufficient light on the question. **Timoneda's book seems to contain the whole truth, although sometimes hidden, of this crucial process.**

Such a complex and vital subject demanded a critical, independent spirit and an erudition out of the ordinary. One had to first know and fully dominate the whole development and genesis of ancient and medieval board games. And the history of Spain and ancient languages. And, very specially, it required a unique knowledge of the prolific Spanish bibliography on the game of draughts, in particular from the 16th and 17th centuries. The great truth of this revolution, the most important event in the history of both games, is encapsulated in the 1635 edition of Timoneda, in Tolosa, and extremely rare book, and with an unsettling cloud of mystery surrounding it. Yet nevertheless, such assets would still be insufficient. One would have to know all there is to know about the origin of modern chess and the early Spanish books and manuscript. Govert Westerveld, for our greater good fortune, was in possession of all these prerequisites.

He paved the way for our later decisive collaboration. The texts from Timoneda's book, the language used, the notation (we know, thanks to Hernando Alonso de Herrera, that in 1517 games were being

annotated, a fact that tallies with the time of elaboration of the texts by Timoneda), the diagrams (with pawns and queens in chess), the configuration of the pages, the adornments; in fact, Timoneda's book confirms the connection with *marro de punta*, and the first written manifestation (1518) with chess, at a time when this had gone through the greatest transformation in its history. And as if that were not sufficient, all the documents, both initial ones as well as later confirmatory ones, besides all successive texts, can be traced to Valencia.

Therefore Govert Westerveld is not, in essence, maintaining anything different than what his friend Ricardo Calvo, or we ourselves for that matter, had claimed about the origins of modern chess. Now all the scholarly research we have carried out comes

together in perfect harmony and can be studied together as a whole, as if our souls were connected. Yet Westerveld does not stop there, he goes much further and poses many questions whose answers he strives after diligently. Once it has been studied and clarified where such an important change took place (Valencia, Spain) and how the process came about (in virtue of the coherence of the documents from Valencia), Govert asked himself a third question: Why?, what motivated it and brought it about. And his discovery, now fully validated, could not have been more stunning: the impulse came from the Grand Dame of Spanish life, Isabella of Castile, whose heart begun to beat in her image, in the little queen made of wood. While chess has always been an illustrious mirror on life, it had hitherto never reflected anything as sublime as incorporating the all-powerful queen. In short, any attempt to debunk the work of Govert Westerveld would have to be done on the three separate fronts mentioned above (*where, how and why*). This would also imply combating the research and contributions of Ricardo Calvo and myself. Given that the place where modern chess came into being, Valencia, also saw the birth of the game of *marro de punta* (draughts).

Once again, the researcher Westerveld has followed the same equation: Intuitive idea plus profound and rigorous research equals coming up with conclusive documentary proof.

I had always suspected that in the crossover between the game of draughts and modern chess, as I have written on more than one occasion, we would be able to find new proof that would bring them together as a whole. Because the intersection is Valencia. And this can be no accident. Once and again, and now I understand why, Ricardo Calvo encouraged me to contact and work with Govert Westerveld. The grand master, by now weary, was waging his most difficult game, the only one that a fighter like him could not win, and nonetheless, even with the declaration of mate, he never gave up and continued working to the very end. Yet he knew that his friend Govert was fighting single-handedly against history, and against the lack of understanding (an equally tiring battle), but he knew that he was right and that finally his ideas would find their rightful place in the history of chess. Nevertheless, the work that still needed to be done was not easy, a lot of time and serious research would be required. He knew the truth, yet he was better aware than anybody else of the groundless criticisms and the obstacles strewn in the path of its definitive acceptance by the community of historians. And Govert Westerveld had a decisive role to play in all this.

Nonetheless, the intersection between the games of chess and draughts was much greater than was first thought, as the present research demonstrates. And as could not be otherwise: with the work and cooperation of one of the all-time great figures of the history of draughts and a chess historian specialized in the medieval-renaissance period and technical bibliography, everything would out. Indeed, a solid foundation on which to accommodate a truth that had so fiercely resisted the light of day. If this were not the case, without this team work, a lot, and maybe too much, time would have gone by until everything would have finally settled into its rightful place.

Without Westerveld I would never have revised the manuscript *Scachs d'amor*, and it was he who gave me the new eyes to look at it. This has allowed us to precisely date not only the manuscript but also the actual origin of modern chess (1475-1476), and we can also see that this text resolves the question of the origin of the powerful Queen in chess and

draughts, as it underscores the connections with Queen Isabella of Castile, now transformed into the new piece on the chessboard, as well as the events and vicissitudes of the Catholic monarchy. The process was to culminate with the profound study of Timoneda's book that led us to conclude that it was the first written manifestation of the game known as *marro de punta* (draughts). We had also to rule out Torquemada as the author of a book printed in Valencia in 1547, which proved to be the beginning of all bibliographies and this too was to produce an earthquake in specialized chess bibliography. Our far-reaching study, in which we invested many hours and made countless consultations, hoped to consolidate Torquemada as the author, given the mystery that had surrounded the lost book from 1547. However we found that all the real verifiable evidence (ruling out quite a lot that had been generally accepted up until now) pointed to the fact that the author of the book from 1547 could be none other than Timoneda.

Here I wish to reflect the unique experience it has been for me to work alongside Govert Westerveld. It has partly revived my faith in people, making up for former disappointments, and reaffirmed my belief in the importance of scholarly research although all our lives may go in it. The honesty and friendship of Govert Westerveld were my greatest discoveries, and were a just reward in themselves.

A few concluding words are now called for. The -moment has arrived to sweep aside a number of false truths after centuries of unwarranted acceptance. It is now time for reflection to join forces, to abandon sterile battles. It is a time in which we should feel proud, for the mere fact of achieving it, of experiencing and living through it. Now we know that the truth can no longer be hidden. It is now time for recognition.

The words of Dr. Santiago Ramón y Cajal. Nobel Prize for Medicine, come to mind:

It doesn't matter whether the change is welcomed with malicious condemnation, with treacherous invectives, with even crueller silence; as long as reason is on your side, it will not be long before the modernizer begins to attract young people, who, precisely because of

their youth, have no past to defend; on your side will also be those impartial wise men, who, in the midst of the overpowering flow of reigning doctrine, know how to maintain a calm mood and independent criteria.

It is now time to thank Govert Westerveld for all his effort and determination. The tireless dedication of so many years, defending Spanish culture, rescuing one of our most everlasting treasures. Spain has in Govert Westerveld one of its most well-loved sons.

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